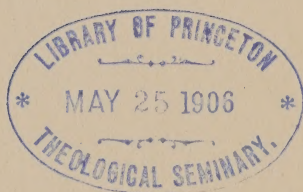


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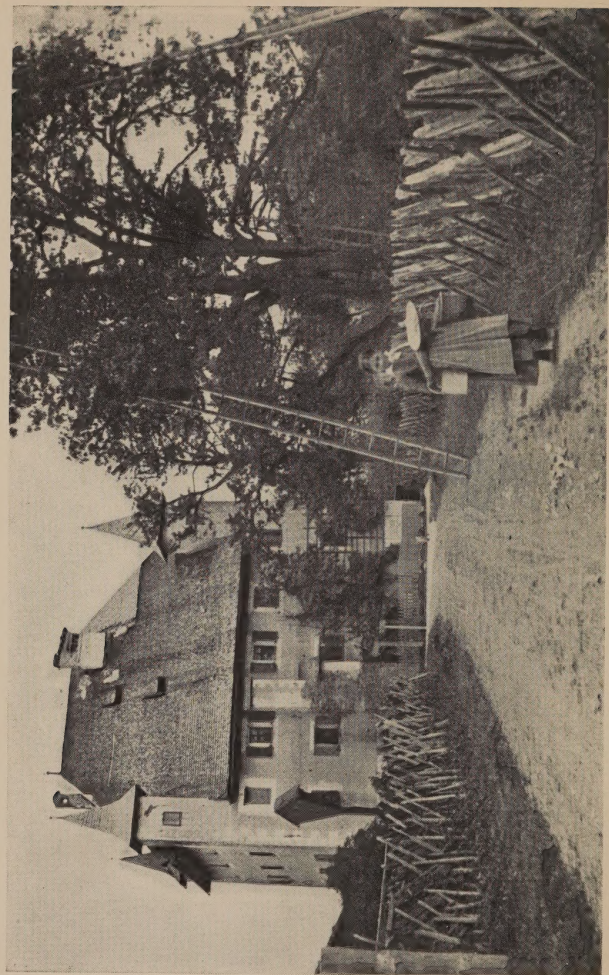
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OUR EUROPEAN
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AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN LIFE IN
TOWN AND COUNTRY



A COUNTRY HOUSE NEAR ZELL-AM-SEE

♫ ♫ ♫ AUSTRO-
HUNGARIAN
LIFE IN TOWN
AND COUNTRY

By FRANCIS H. E. PALMER

ILLUSTRATED

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
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AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN LIFE IN TOWN AND COUNTRY

CHAPTER I

LAND AND PEOPLE

IF it be true that there is always a close analogy between the life of a people and the physical characteristics of the country in which they dwell, a journey through the Austro-Hungarian monarchy would alone suffice to show that the history of its inhabitants, if it accorded with the scenery of their land, must indeed have been thrilling and romantic. Vast Alpine regions, rivalling in their grandeur the mountain monarchs of Switzerland, contrast with wide-spreading plains that, from their very immensity, are almost equally awe-inspiring. Majestic rivers, rock-bound lakes and mountain torrents, boundless forests and treeless

wastes, picturesque hills and verdant, flower-filled valleys, luxuriant meadows, laughing cornland, and heavily loaded vineyards, all pass before us in review. Nothing is wanting to recall to the mind almost every phase of human life and human passion,—the heroic daring of the mountaineer, the love of liberty and impatience of external control among the races that so long ranged at will over the wide-spread plains, the laborious life of the cultivator of those endless tracts of cornland, and, above all, the element of romance, the very breath of music and poetry that seems in Austria-Hungary to float around the stupendous mountains and penetrate the recesses of the densest forests. It seems, indeed, as if Nature herself had provided, in the physical characteristics of the country, a fitting arena for the romantic and too often tragic drama that forms the history of the Austro-Hungarian peoples during the last thousand years.

Through those mountain gorges, over those wide plains, or along the silent highway of the Danube, for many centuries tribe after tribe of Asiatic races poured into this corner of South-eastern Europe. Through Austria-Hungary, too, passed many of the armies of the Crusaders, men from almost every land in Christendom, marching eastward for the liberation of Palestine. Austria was the meeting-place of East and West, and upon its plains, and among its mountains and forests, was fought out the long life-and-death

struggle that saved Europe from the horrors of an Asiatic invasion. That contest is over. The Mongol hordes were driven back and the armies of the dreaded Ottoman Empire no longer threaten the east of Europe; but the actors in that long tragedy still remain. And, perhaps, when we think of the part they had to play, we can understand more easily how it came to pass that the keynote of Austro-Hungarian history has always been essentially dramatic, and how this peculiar characteristic seems now to have become an inseparable element in the character of the people themselves.

But Austria-Hungary is also the meeting-place of long-past ages and modern times. Side by side with all the scientific marvels of the present day, we meet at every step traces of the life of by-gone centuries. Time-worn cities, towns, and castles, picturesque costumes and curious national customs, all combine to carry us back from the prose of the twentieth century to the romance and poetry of an earlier age.

But it is not only the romantic beauty of the country, its troubled past, and the survival of modes of existence that have disappeared elsewhere, that render the life of the Austro-Hungarian peoples exceptionally interesting. Not less striking than the contrasting physical features of their land is the strange assemblage of races that inhabit the Dual Monarchy. And here it will be well to remind the reader that the expression

"Austro-Hungarian," though it is the only name we can give to the dominions of the Emperor Francis Joseph, is apt to be somewhat misleading. The Germanic Austrians and the Hungarians, or Magyars, taken together, form less than half the total population. The majority of the Austro-Hungarian peoples, therefore, belong to races which are neither "Austrian" nor "Hungarian," properly so called. Most of them are of Slavonic origin; but they, too, are broken up into numerous races, more or less distinct from one another in language, religion, and habits of life. Czechs, Croats and Servians, Ruthenes, Poles, Slovaks, and Austrian-Bulgarians are all Slavonic races, nearly akin to, and sometimes identical with, others who dwell beyond the frontiers of Austria-Hungary. Quite separate from all these are races more nearly allied to the Latin group, such as the Roumanians or Wallachians and Italians in part of the Austrian Tyrol and the Coast-lands. Nor are these all. There are, besides, over two million Jews, and considerable fragments of other races—Greeks, Turks, and Gipsies.

The influences which in our own country converted the Anglo-Saxon, Danish, Celtic, and other races into the homogeneous English people are, and have almost always been, entirely wanting in the Austro-Hungarian dominions. Among these numerous races local patriotism is a far stronger passion than that which unites them to

the Empire as a whole. From the Middle Ages until the eighteenth century the strongest bond of union for most of the nationalities was the dread of absorption by their Asiatic foes. It is, indeed, but little more than two centuries since Vienna itself was besieged for the last time by the Turks. Grouped together upon the very threshold of the Eastern world, the full fury of the Mongol and subsequently of the Ottoman invasions burst first of all upon the hapless peoples who inhabited what is now the eastern half of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. We must bear this fact in mind, or we shall fail to grasp the real origin and the significance of many of the picturesque customs, the traditional modes of life, and the national and religious feelings which are so deeply rooted among the people. It was not love for their Teutonic neighbours that led the Magyar and Slavonic races to place themselves under the protection of the German rulers of the Austrian dominions. The Austrian rule in those days seemed to them but a shade better than that of the Turks, and hatred both for their Moslem enemies and their Teutonic protectors intensified yet more strongly their devotion to their own respective nationalities, religions, and customs.

The danger of absorption by Turkey has long passed away, but another has arisen in the growing power of the Russian and German Empires—the “heirs-presumptive” to the Austrian dominions, should that strange agglomeration of states

ever fall to pieces. The great popularity of the Emperor, due to the wise policy he has adopted, is unquestionably a powerful bond of union, but it in no way diminishes the mutual hostility and jealousy of these diverse races. Their local patriotism lies at the root even of their loyalty to their Sovereign. If Francis Joseph is beloved by his people, their loyal devotion is not felt for the "Emperor," but for the Sovereign of the "Kingdom," or "Duchy," to which they belong.

From yet another point of view the position of Austria-Hungary is altogether exceptional. In an Empire the inhabitants of which are not a nation, but a group of many different races, patriotically devoted to the interests of their own particular provinces, but profoundly jealous of one another, the ordinary difficulties of government are increased a hundredfold. In Austria-Hungary, however, they are rendered greater still by the fact that there is no race that so greatly outnumbers the others as to draw smaller nationalities to itself by the force of natural attraction, or by so evidently occupying the foremost place in wealth and power as England, for example, does in its relations with Wales, Ireland, or even Scotland. The two would-be dominant races, the German and the Magyar, are each outnumbered in most of the States by the minor nationalities which are associated with them.

We shall see more of the political aspect of Austro-Hungarian life in a later chapter, but I

must here remind the reader that, in the Dual Monarchy, the Austrian (or Cisleithan) dominions and the Kingdom of Hungary now form two almost independent states, though linked together by the Crown of the Austrian Emperor. Each possesses a separate government of its own, but the difficulties that Austria has to face are far greater than those of Hungary. Austria, it is true, has the advantage in population, wealth, and civilisation, although Hungary has rapidly advanced of late years. On the other hand, the Austrian dominions are far less compact, extending in an irregularly shaped mass from Switzerland to Russia. In Austria, too, the system of Home Rule has been carried out to almost the utmost possible limit, as the various provinces are now endowed with no less than seventeen Diets, possessed of considerable legislative power. Besides this, while all the smaller nationalities in Austria are only divided by the frontier from other members of their own or kindred races, which owe allegiance to foreign governments, even the Germanic race itself, the only one that might be powerful enough to give stability to the whole Federation, is being gradually drawn away from the Austrian Empire towards the other Teutonic peoples who have grouped themselves around the Prussian monarchy in the new and progressive Empire of Germany. Hungary, on the other hand, has a smaller number of minor races to deal with, and—a matter of yet greater

importance—there is no disturbing influence to weaken the power of the Magyars, since all, except a very small fraction of them, dwell within their own dominions.

The situation in Hungary, too, is different from another point of view. During its long and eventful history, it evolved a political ideal of its own which has profoundly affected the national life. The Golden Bull (*Aranybulla*), the famous Charter which the Hungarian nobles compelled their King to grant, a few years after the signing of our own Magna Charta at Runnymede, has always been regarded by the Hungarians as the most precious guarantee for their political liberties. A curious sidelight is thrown upon the Magyar character by the last clause of this Charter, which gave all the nobles of Hungary, and any individual among them, the absolute right of revolting against their King should he violate any of the provisions of the Golden Bull. No contrast could be greater than that indicated by this provision in the Hungarian Constitution and the system of government that prevailed in the other dominions of the Austrian Crown, a contrast that we shall find constantly repeated in the life and character of the two peoples.

In Austria Hungary, as in most other countries, it is in the rural districts that the national characteristics of the people are most strongly developed. It is here that the most striking features in the national life were formed and moulded dur-

ing the long ages of their troubled history, and a glance first of all at the rural existence of the Austrian and Hungarian races respectively will give us the key to many of the intricate questions in Austro-Hungarian affairs that would seem almost inexplicable if looked at from any other point of view.





CHAPTER II

THE AUSTRIAN NOBILITY

COUNTRY life in all parts of the Austro-Hungarian dominions possesses a charm of its own that rarely fails to strike even the most casual visitor. Nowhere else in Europe, perhaps, does it present itself under so many varied aspects, but everywhere it is interesting and picturesque.

As might be expected among the Austrian races of Germanic and Slavonic origin, there is often much that reminds one of the corresponding classes in Germany or Russia; but notwithstanding these frequent points of resemblance, the Austrian, to whatever race he belongs, almost always possesses very distinct national characteristics of his own. Whether of Germanic or of Slavonic race, there is rarely any difficulty in distinguishing the generally light-hearted German Austrian from his kinsmen in the German Fatherland, or the Austrian Slavs from those living in the Russian Empire.

For Austro-Hungarians of every race, and every class of society, the pleasures of country life

have almost always a peculiar fascination. In this respect even the Polish nobles in Austria differ widely from the higher classes of Slavonic race in Russia, who, as a rule, regard a prolonged residence upon their estates, whenever circumstances render it inevitable, as a punishment but little less terrible than exile to Siberia. In Austria, it is true, the wealthiest nobles are often absentees, or spend but a very short period of the year upon their estates; but absenteeism is not, as in Russia, regarded as a sign of social distinction. In the case of the Austrian noble, however, it must be admitted that sport, rather than what would in England be regarded as the duties of a landed proprietor, forms the chief attraction in country life. The hereditary passion for sport in the Imperial family is well known, but that of the landowners and the higher classes generally is just as real and by no means a mere fashion. Their love for the free life of mountain, plain, and forest is as natural an element in the Austro-Hungarian character as in the English. It is perhaps quite as much this passionate love of nature which has led to the creation of the vast number of far-famed Austrian watering-places as the medicinal virtues of their mineral springs. In such localities the British and American tourists, by whom they are so largely frequented, have ample opportunities of seeing at least some phases of Austrian character; but it would be a great mistake to suppose that the "Austrian life" seen in

these fashionable resorts gives a fair idea of the normal existence of the Austrians at home.

Frank and open-hearted though they unquestionably are, it needs far more than a flying visit to the country, or a casual meeting at a hotel during a few weeks' holiday, to gauge the strangely complex elements in their character or form any accurate idea of their real home life. The Austrians possess many excellent and attractive qualities, but, notwithstanding, especially among the higher classes, they are, before all things else, a pleasure-loving people. There are many striking contrasts between the fiery and impetuous Magyars, the more dreamy and imaginative Slavonic peoples, and the Germanic Austrians who have hitherto regarded themselves as *the* Imperial race, whose language, religion, and customs were destined to replace those of the "inferior" nationalities. But in one respect they all possess a common characteristic, an intense passion for pleasure of every kind, which not even the most grinding poverty can wholly suppress. We will disregard for the moment the life led by the great nobles, many of whom possess princely fortunes, as we shall meet with them again when describing Court life in town and country.

Austria is still comparatively poor, and it is in the home life of the landed proprietors of average fortune, of the *Bauers*, and the labouring peasantry in the rural districts, rather than amidst the splendour of social functions in the capital or

the chief pleasure resorts, that we shall find the normal features of Austrian character.

Notwithstanding the Austrian noble's love for country life, he, like the Russian landed proprietor, is not remarkable for his business capacity in the affairs of everyday life. There are exceptions, of course, but as a rule, and especially among the smaller landowners, Austrian estates can rarely be taken as models of good management. This is partly due to the want of capital, but besides this there is a recklessness in the typical Austrian noble's character, an incapacity to take life seriously, which is generally only too evident in the administration of his property. I will take as an example the family of an Austrian noble to whose country residence I have often paid a very enjoyable visit. If in the management of his private affairs there was somewhat more of the national *laissez-faire* than among the average of his neighbours, it was only a question of degree, and his manner of life may be regarded as a type of that led by a very large proportion of the class to which he belonged. The house was approached by an avenue of fine trees running through several acres of park, gardens, and pleasure-grounds. Fifty years ago my friend's father had erected a monumental gateway, with a gatekeeper's lodge adjoining, but the latter was still unfinished, and the railing-in of the park and pleasure grounds had never even been attempted. The peasant labourers upon the home farm had

made a short cut through the grounds beside the gateway. This at length was employed by every one, and the approach to the house was along a bone-shaking road that skirted the "carriage drive," now a mass of weeds and wild flowers, with here and there in the centre a promising young fir or pine tree. A large conservatory had been built years ago by my friend himself, but the heating apparatus had never been provided. The mansion, which dated from the middle of the eighteenth century, was built upon the model of the French *châteaux* of the period, but had never been finished. It would, indeed, have cost a fortune to complete it upon the scale upon which it had been commenced. The gardens and grounds alone would have needed a small army of gardeners to keep them in order. Only the entrance hall, the principal *salon*, dining-room, and about a dozen other rooms were habitable. All the rest remained exactly as they did when, a century and a half ago, my friend's great-grandfather suddenly realised that the house he was building would need far more than his whole fortune to complete. A magnificent stairway led to rooms in which not even the floor had been laid down, and which still remained a wilderness of bricks, planks, and plaster, recalling to my mind the unfinished rooms in the palace of King Ludwig of Bavaria at the Chiemsee. The furniture in the habitable rooms was a curious mixture of styles. In the drawing-room were handsome ormolu tables and inlaid

cabinets of considerable value, side by side with ordinary cane-seated chairs of cheap Viennese make. In all the other rooms similar incongruities were to be found. In one were a splendid polished floor beautifully inlaid and a finely painted ceiling; in another the floor was of roughly stained wood, but partly covered with rich and expensive rugs and carpets. Upon plastered yellow-washed walls were hung fine old family portraits in richly gilded frames of carved wood, each of which was a work of art in itself.

My friend, who was an ardent admirer of all things English, had laid out a tennis-court beside his house. This was kept in excellent order, but beyond, the view of a beautiful little ornamental lake was completely cut off by the wild growth of willows and other bushes upon its banks. The owner of the estate, a man of education and refinement, was perfectly conscious of all its deficiencies and incongruities. He was always going to complete the old family mansion "when his fortunes changed," but a seeming incapacity to look at the practical side of life, or even to take the necessary measures to secure the ends he had most at heart, frustrated all his spasmodic attempts at setting things right. His fortune was by no means inconsiderable, but losses at cards, the bane of Austrian as it is of Russian society, kept him in a state of chronic impecuniosity. Open-handed, hospitable, lavish, spending money

with both hands upon wholly needless extravagances, with frequent alternations of extreme economy in matters connected with his property that would have considerably increased his income, he was nevertheless a charming host, and possessed of the special fascination of manner that renders the Austrians of the higher classes popular almost everywhere.

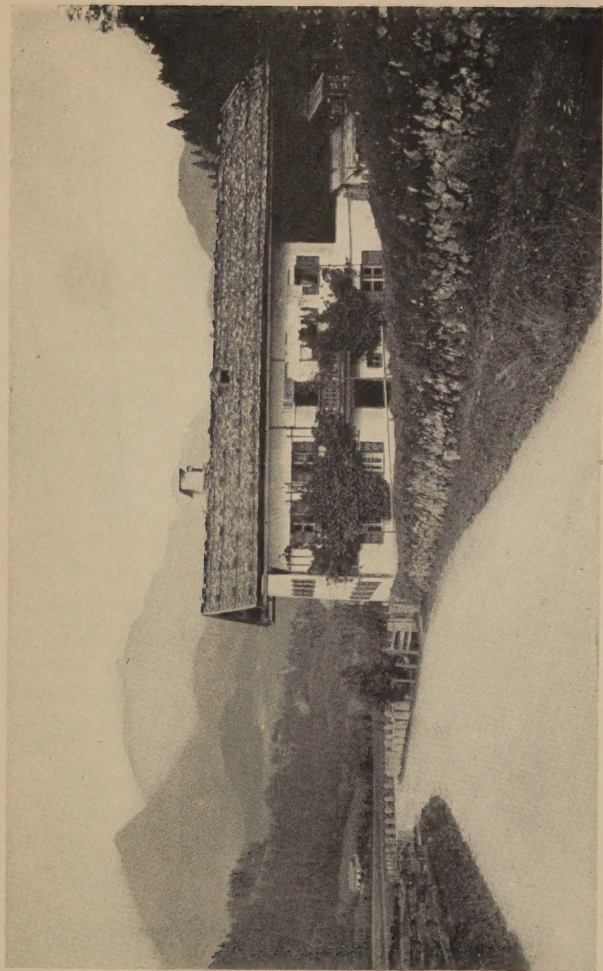
Both the Austrians and Hungarians are, as a rule, devoid of the false shame which so often leads the Russian nobles to adopt all kinds of expedients to convey the impression that their wealth and social importance are far greater than in reality. The Austrian noble will often reveal his impecunious condition with almost startling frankness, and never dream that he is running the risk of losing caste among his associates by the admission. So long as any means remain of satisfying his craving for pleasure and excitement, he will continue his happy-go-lucky existence to the very brink of disaster; and then, when all is gone, and irretrievable ruin stares him in the face, only too often by his own act, he will quit a world that can no longer offer him any compensation for the trouble of living. In Russia the more practical character of the women of the higher classes often compensates in some degree for the reckless extravagance of their husbands and fathers. In Austria this more stable element in the landed aristocracy is much more rare. Charming as Austrian women of the higher classes most certainly

are, good wives and mothers as are unquestionably very many among them, the comparative rarity of the prosaic quality of practical common sense is a very serious misfortune for society. For them, fully as much as for the men of their own class, the world of poetry and romance seems often more real than the crude, hard facts of everyday life. Among the poorer class of nobles, compelled to cultivate their own land themselves, the absence of this controlling influence in their households makes itself especially felt. Country life, for the majority of Austrian women among the aristocracy, is enjoyable enough so long as it means riding, shooting, or hunting excursions, balls and parties, music, dancing, and private theatricals. Its charm quickly disappears when it entails the control of a large household, the supervision of the dairy, and the usual avocations of a farmer's wife. The attractions of Vienna, or at least the nearest large provincial town, become irresistible; and often in a month's visit half a year's income will have been lost or won over the card-table. There are, of course, many exceptions, but far too often it needs a greater amount of moral courage than this class of the Austrian nobles generally possesses to abandon a mode of life which society demands.

A small Austrian landowner of good family would not lose caste if it were known that his lands were all mortgaged, his crops often sold in advance, and that the old family mansion showed

evident signs of becoming a more or less picturesque ruin; for only too large a number of his friends and neighbours are in the same plight. The urgent demands of his property for improved agricultural machinery, of his land for drainage, or of his farm buildings for repairs, are all put off to a more convenient season if the money be needed for a grand ball to which all the notabilities of the district are invited, the entertainment of a houseful of visitors from Vienna, or in winter a splendid *fête* upon the ice. Nothing could be more beautiful than the scene to be witnessed at some of these winter *fêtes*, in which hundreds of lamps and flaming torches convert a picturesque corner of a forest into a piece of fairyland. From the severe winters in many parts of Austria, this form of social gathering is a very favourite one, and is often organised at great expense. Musicians are frequently engaged from Vienna or the provincial capital, ice kiosks of fantastic form are erected and brilliantly lighted, and the skaters, in rich and varied costumes and splendid furs, trace intricate mazes upon the glittering surface of the ice.

But though almost all the pleasures of the Austrian nobles are expensive, money alone by no means ensures an *entrée* into the society of the old landed aristocracy. As an example of this, I may mention a case that came to my knowledge a few years ago. A millionaire financier of German origin purchased a large estate in Upper Austria.



AN AUSTRIAN COUNTRY HOUSE.

It was his great ambition to be recognised as a territorial magnate by the old *noblesse*. As most of those in the vicinity were owners of small but heavily mortgaged estates, he felt confident that they would all be only too glad to court the favour of so great a man as himself, and thus give him the *entrée* into society that he so ardently desired. The fine old *château* was restored and refurnished at immense cost, though not perhaps with the best taste. The grounds were laid out afresh, and the adjoining forest was cleared of the undergrowth that had sprung up during years of neglect and mismanagement. The land was drained and improved, and agricultural machinery was introduced. But, alas! the new proprietor soon discovered that there are things that not even money can purchase, and that all his hopes of being received as an equal by the old landowners in the neighbourhood were vain.

“I could buy up the whole lot of them if I liked,” he grumbled to me one day; “and yet they treat us as if we were mere peasants! In fact, they treat the peasants better. I have often seen the Countess X—— calling upon some of the little *Bauers* near and chatting quite amiably with their wives and daughters. Would you believe it?—she has never even entered our house. And yet every year they have a lot of riff-raff down from Vienna to stop with them — writers, artists, singers, musicians, and even actors, people who have hardly a florin to bless themselves with!”

The costly and disappointing discovery that the unfortunate financier made reveals a very typical phase in the character of the old-fashioned Austrian nobility in their country homes. Their intercourse with the working classes on their estates, and with the poorer peasantry in their neighbourhood, is natural and unconstrained, for their respective social positions are clearly defined and recognised on both sides. In the world of literature and art, music and the drama, it is the same. For generations the houses of the Austrian nobility both in town and country have always been thrown open to literary men and artists, quite irrespective of their fortunes. As a rule, however, and above all in the more conservative country districts, their doors would be as rigorously closed to the *nouveau riche*, however great his wealth might be, if that was all he had to offer. Of course, in Austria as elsewhere, the half-ruined representatives of grand old historical families are sometimes willing to restore their fortunes by marriage with the daughters of commercial or financial millionaires. When such marriages occur, however, it is generally in the families of the highest nobility in Vienna, and far more rarely among the provincial aristocracy residing upon their estates.

The character of the Polish nobles in Austria is of a different type from that of the Teutonic nobility. Not less unpractical, and often as reckless in the administration of their affairs, they resem-

ble more nearly the old French *noblesse* of the Faubourg St. Germain. Like them, they have learned nothing by their misfortunes, and they have forgotten nothing. The world has moved on since the partition of their ancient kingdom, but they have remained ever since stranded, as it were, upon the shoals of the eighteenth century. For the Polish nobles, whether in Russia or in Austria, it often seems as if the most important affairs in life sink into insignificance in comparison with the loss of their country's independence. The feeling is not due to patriotism, however, in the real meaning of the word, for rarely will a Polish noble do anything of a practical character to raise the status of the Polish or Ruthenian peasantry upon his estate. It is one of personal humiliation alone at the loss of the power and privileges their forefathers enjoyed, and so grievously misused, in by-gone times. A poor Austrian landowner will generally manage his property himself, if he resides in the country, and, however careless he may be in the administration of his own affairs, he rarely forgets that his position entails a certain amount of responsibility towards those who are dependent upon him. The Polish noble will talk a great deal more than the Austrian about the "moral responsibilities of his position," but seldom indeed will his professions take any practical form. As long as he can afford it, he leaves the real control of everything to his agents, and as a result in every Polish district the power and

influence of the ubiquitous Jews are constantly increasing. They alone purchase on their own terms the produce of the land, and by complicated systems of "rings" retain in their own hands a complete monopoly of the rural trade. Between the Polish noble and the Polish and Ruthenian peasantry there is a great gulf fixed, and in Austria, as in Russia, the Jew has stepped into the vacant space. As we shall see in dealing with Hungarian life, the economic development of the Transleithan half of the monarchy derives far more assistance from the Magyar nobles than Austria does from the Germanic or the Slavonic aristocracy.

Fortunately for Austria, beneath the nobles of various fortunes there is another section of society, known in Austria and Germany as the *Bauer* class, which in the former country is capable of supplying to a great extent the more solid moral qualities of which the Empire is so sorely in need. I have intentionally employed the German expression *Bauer*, as the word "peasant"—the nearest English equivalent—would convey quite a false impression when applied to the richer members of this class. The Austrian *Bauers* and the Hungarian *Paraszs* occupy a position corresponding in many respects to the French *paysans*. Like the latter, they form numerically a very large proportion of the whole population, embracing not only men who are really "peasants" in the ordinary English

sense of the word, but also agriculturists in the enjoyment of very substantial fortunes, who resemble more nearly the prosperous English yeomen of former days. In many districts, indeed, *Bauers* are to be met with who, from a financial point of view, are really far better off than many of the poorer landowners of aristocratic lineage. At the same time, whenever they happen to be found in the same locality, there is always socially a sharp dividing line between them. *Noblesse oblige*, and the noble landowner, however severe the pinch may be, feels himself compelled to keep up, as long as he can, a style of living that becomes harder and harder to bear with the diminishing value of the produce of his estate, and only too frequently he is forced to make up the deficiency by successive and often crushing mortgages.

But the Bauer also has a social code of his own, to which he clings all the more tenaciously, as, in his case, too, it is based upon class feeling and pride of race. Rarely, indeed, even among the most prosperous Bauers, so long as they are occupied in the cultivation of their land, is there any tendency to ape the manners or social customs of even the poorest of the aristocracy or of the official or professional classes, although a growing proportion of the latter is now drawn from the younger sons of their own families. It has hitherto been the pride of the Austrian Bauer that he is able to provide his household with

almost all the necessities of life from the productions of his own land alone. The fall in the money value of his agricultural produce consequently affects him only in that portion of it which he is obliged to sell to provide for his relatively small outgoing expenses, his taxes, and the purchase of the few commodities he needs which his land does not produce.

Unfortunately, there are influences at work which must eventually change the patriarchal and picturesque mode of life still led even by the richest Bauers; but long-established customs and habits of thought are not easily uprooted, and the steadfastness of character and capacity for work that have been formed during many generations have left traces that play no small part in the success that is now often won by their sons in other walks of life. This is especially observable in the universities, where the sons of Bauers often distinguish themselves far more than students drawn from a higher social class.

It would need far more space than I can command to give a detailed description of the life of the various classes of Austrian peasantry, not only from the fact that the economic conditions are by no means the same in all parts of the Empire, but also from the striking differences in nationality. Notwithstanding this, however, there are many wide-spread and picturesque customs that are common to the peasantry in nearly all parts of the Austrian half of the monarchy.

To illustrate this, I will take as an example the family of a well-to-do typical Bauer whose acquaintance I made under very favourable circumstances, as their mode of existence will give us an insight into the relations of the richer peasants with the agricultural labourers and several other classes of the Austrian people. Nearly all I shall describe might also be found, with but slight variations, among most Bauers in a similar position of fortune in the Tyrol, Upper and Lower Austria, and in many parts of Bohemia.





CHAPTER III

THE AUSTRIAN BAUER

SOME years ago I made the acquaintance at Vienna of a very intelligent young engineer and his brother, a doctor, both of whom had recently completed their studies with distinction. They were the sons of a prosperous Bauer in Lower Austria, and, proud though their father now was of the success they had won, it had been no easy matter to break through his class prejudices and induce him to give his consent to their entering upon careers so foreign to his old-world ideas as the laying down of railways or the cultivation of microbes. His eldest son, it is true, remained at home, and, when the time came, would succeed him in the occupation of his land. But, alas! even he had transgressed one of the most cherished customs of the old-fashioned Bauers by marrying out of his class. In a moment of weakness his father had allowed his only daughter, after leaving the village school, to go to Gratz for a few years to finish her education. She went as a simple Bauer's daughter, and returned a "Fräulein." Worse than all, she had brought back

with her a schoolgirl friend, the daughter of a wealthy timber merchant, with whom her brother had fallen in love and had soon after married. The stars in their courses had fought against the Bauer's conservatism, and, cling as he might to the end of his days to the habits and customs of his forefathers, the future life of the next generation of his family would inevitably be that of the burgher class.

All this was told me by my engineering friend when he learned that I was making a study of the economic condition of the various nationalities of Austria-Hungary, Russia, and Eastern Europe generally, and he most kindly suggested that I should pay him a visit during his holidays at his father's house, where he promised that I should have the warmest of welcomes, and a full opportunity of seeing the kind of life led by the class that he maintained—and perhaps not altogether wrongly—is destined to render more real service to his country than the fashionable aristocracy in Vienna, or the half-ruined noble landowners living upon their country estates.

When I reached his home a few weeks later, I found that his promise of a cordial reception was no mere form of words. The richer Austrian Bauers, proud and reserved though they unquestionably are in their general relations with those outside their own class, regard the warmest hospitality to those whom they do receive as friends as the highest of social virtues. The house,

though larger than that of the majority of Bauers, was built upon the same general model as is adopted by those of average or smaller fortunes. The farmhouse and outbuildings were, as usual, surrounded by a ring fence, and the furious barking of a dozen dogs of various breeds gave me a warning of the kind of reception that an unwelcome visitor might expect. Another typical characteristic of an ordinary Bauer's residence was also carefully preserved—a group of tall trees called *Schopf-Bäumer*, which are regarded as a protection against lightning. The house itself recalled many of the features of those of the small landowners in Russia known as *Odnodvortsy*. As in Russia, timber, whenever it is obtainable, is the favourite building material. The style of construction, however, is usually far more picturesque in Austria than that adopted in Russia. Carved wood is more freely employed, and there is generally a pleasing variety in the ornamentation but seldom to be met with in the country houses of the less inventive Russians. There is rarely any great deviation, however, from the type common to all. The house consists almost always of a ground floor only, except for the lofts below the wide, shingle-covered roof. This generally continues far beyond the walls on one side, and, supported by wooden pillars, forms a covered space, where many of the household operations are carried on in summer. The front door is curiously studded with large-headed iron nails,

generally taking the form of a special dedication to the patron saint. Upon the door also, or sometimes upon the wall adjoining, are fastened a number of little wooden crosses. In the house I am describing, above these was placed the figure of a running stag, carved in wood, a trophy borne home in triumph by the Bauer in his younger days from one of the shooting competitions which are such a favourite amusement in many parts of Austria. The front door opened into the central room, the *Laube*, with which, in the smaller houses, all the others communicate. Here, too, are generally placed the stairs which lead to the loft beneath the roof. The number of rooms the house contains, of course, depends upon the importance of the Bauer's estate. The largest is the *Gesinde-stube*, the household room. This is often of considerable size, and frequently lighted by five or six windows. Around the room are placed benches with lockers below. The wooden floor, blackened by age and smoke, is carefully polished, and the plastered walls are often coloured some shade of red or brown. In my host's house, as is usual in the homes of the old-fashioned Bauer families, the furniture in these working rooms is all home-made and of the most solid construction. It is usually painted red or brown, and gives just the impression of form and colouring that the old German and Dutch painters delighted in depicting. There is generally a touch of brighter colour too. Near the window stands the great

family linen-chest, painted with strange designs of birds and flowers, inspired, probably, by the quaint signboards to be seen in so many old-world towns in Austria and Hungary. On the other side is the green-tiled stove and oven, and around it seats and settles, with the grandmother's place of honour in the ingle-nook.

Opening out of the *Stube* is the kitchen, and here in picturesque confusion are baskets and casks of agricultural produce, fruit and vegetables, and the huge open brick stove with an overhanging chimney, beneath which is suspended an enormous kettle over the ever-burning fire of wood, turf, or peat.

In the family rooms of the wealthier class of Bauers old furniture of real artistic interest is often to be found, the accumulated heirlooms of many generations. In Upper and Lower Austria, Styria, and some parts of Bohemia, old oak cabinets, tables, and bedsteads, handsomely carved and curiously inlaid with brasswork, are often met with in the homes of the richer Bauers. The dates they bear suggest the history they could so often tell of the days of Wallenstein and the Thirty Years' War. Time moves but slowly in these old-world districts. In the Tyrol I have often heard the dramatic story of Hofer's heroic fight for his country's freedom discussed as though it were but an event of yesterday, and in the rural districts of Bohemia Huss is still the national hero, and not least among those who be-

long to the Roman Catholic Church which sentenced him to death.

As a friend of the two sons who were then at home for a short holiday, I received an open-handed welcome from the Bauer and Bäuerin, and one not less warm from the old grandmother. Still handsome and almost stately in her bearing, she looked, in her picturesque peasant costume, as striking a representative of the disappearing past as her grandsons and granddaughter were of the invasion of modern ideas. After lunch of roast chicken and delicious trout, doubly welcome after a long drive through the fresh mountain air, my host suggested that I should take a walk with him over part of his domain. In spite of all his concessions to modern progress, as was proved by the careers he had allowed his sons to follow, I soon found that his love of the old-world life of his fathers was too deeply rooted to be easily effaced. Very reluctantly he had introduced some new agricultural machinery, and though he was forced to admit that it had some advantages, he persisted that he would have preferred to keep to the old ways. "Of course it saves labour," he remarked; "but, after all, I would rather lose a little by having my work done for me by human beings, who can get some happiness out of life, than by soulless machines."

Not far from his residence stood another and smaller house, the object of which he very graphically described to me. This second dwelling, a

feature of most Bauer farms, is the Dowerhouse, or *Ausnahmshäusel*, and reveals a very curious characteristic of peasant life in Austria. In this case it was occupied by my host's eldest son, a very unusual arrangement. As a rule it is the last refuge of the Bauer himself. For years, as their family is growing up, the ordinary Austrian peasant and his wife look forward sadly to the day when they must abdicate and resign the sceptre of their little kingdom into younger hands. When the eldest son marries, it entails a revolution in the family life, for the mutual relations of all the members are generally completely changed. A notary is called in from the nearest town, and the fateful deed is drawn up. The new Bauer, in assuming the reins of government, undertakes to provide a fixed amount annually, partly in money and partly in kind, for the benefit of his parents. A certain provision has also to be made for his brothers and sisters, and when all is done it often seems as though he would inherit little beyond the dignity of his new position in return for all the responsibility and labour that it entails. And now comes the final ceremony. The ex-Bauer, with his successor and the members of his family, accompanied by the notary, pays his last visit, as master, to the estate. The boundaries are all carefully followed, and on reaching each of the boundary posts or natural features by which his frontier is indicated, the party stops while the old Bauer in solemn tones repeats again and again

the maledictions that would fall upon the head of him who should change his neighbour's landmarks. The inculcation of the lesson is enforced by a ringing box on the ear, which he bestows upon his successor. The infliction is borne with stoical indifference, though, not infrequently, the vigour with which it is given has some relation to the family bargain that has just been concluded, and the generous or illiberal feeling that his son has evinced. It is his last act of authority, and thenceforward he will be but a pensioner upon the land that once was his own. To make this more evident, in many districts the very name of the estate is changed. These peasant lands are usually known by the united Christian names of the actual holder and his two predecessors—usually his father and grandfather. When the new Bauer begins his reign, the oldest name is suppressed, his own name becomes the last of the three, and his father's the second.

Among the richest Bauers, the younger members of the family have generally been already started in life, the daughters are married, and the younger sons now usually take up some trade or profession in town. The change of ownership, therefore, is not generally fraught with very serious consequences for them. Among the poorer Bauers, however, especially in remote or mountainous regions, the case is widely different. Often the younger members of the family elect to remain in their old home, but now as paid employees.

Fortunately, the existence of these old-fashioned Bauers is so patriarchal that the change, so far as their daily life is concerned, is less than might be supposed, the hired servants being, in any case, always treated as members of the family.

Next came a visit to the barns, stables, and cow-houses. The inmates of the latter are the special pride of the Austrian Bauer, particularly in the mountain districts, such as the Tyrol and Styria, where they are sent up to the hill pastures during the summer months. The Austrian peasants affirm that their cattle understand every word that is said in their presence, and explain the alleged accomplishment as the result of their summer visit to the mountains, where their human guardians have no one else to talk to.

The most interesting building, however, was the *Feld-Kasten*, the Bauer's storehouse, and an examination of its contents explains at once how it comes to pass that the Austrian Bauer's estate is a little self-supporting kingdom, in which he has hitherto been but slightly affected by the fluctuations in the money value of his agricultural produce, or even of the manufactured commodities that he needs. The ground floor was occupied mainly with bins containing seeds of various kinds, and a very large provision of smoked beef and pork, dried fruit and vegetables, and other kinds of food preserved in various ways for winter use. One very important item was a large store of *Schmalz*, or butter melted down,

without which the Bäuerin would be unable to cook any of the national dishes. The floor above is reached by a ladder, and here, on shelves, were placed large rolls of linen of different textures, and cloth dyed in various colours for the men's coats and women's dresses. Below were baskets containing trunks of silvery-white spun flax, and woollen yarn for weaving or knitting. In another corner were rows of boots and shoes for men and women, and rolls of leather, from part of which they had been made, coils of rope and string, and a curious collection of tools and instruments in wood and iron, the very use of which would be a mystery to the unlearned visitor. Every one of these articles was made at the Bauer's farm, and nearly all from raw material obtained from his own land. The spinning of the flax was all done at home by the women of his household. The weaving is generally done by a professional weaver, who takes a regular round, going from one Bauer farm to another, and spending a week or two at each. The necessary tailoring and shoemaking are also done by itinerant artisans, who visit the farm when needed and stay there until their task is completed. The amount of work they have to do is very considerable, for the farm servants generally live in the house, and in most districts in Austria are not only lodged and fed, but also provided with working clothes by their master. Under such conditions the wages paid in money to agricultural labourers are

extremely low—from three to four pounds per annum in most districts for men, and from two to three pounds for women. In the purely Slavonic portions of Austria the average earnings are even less ; yet, notwithstanding these low wages, the lot of a farm labourer in the employ of a well-to-do Bauer is not regarded as by any means an unhappy one.

Unfortunately for the labouring class, however, the requirements of the agricultural districts cannot now give employment to their increasing numbers, and a large proportion is forced to seek work in towns. The effect of this upon Austria's growing industry will be shown in a later chapter ; but if we glance once more at the contents of the *Feld-Kasten*, we shall see that the Austrian farm labourer, when forced to seek work in manufacturing towns, is far better equipped for his new life than an English or Irish agricultural labourer would be. In the Bauer household a multiplicity of trades is almost always carried on, and no farm labourer would be employed unless he had some knowledge of one or more of them. The leather for shoes and harness is tanned at home, and some of the farmer's men have to assist and work with the professional shoe and harness maker when he pays his periodical visits, thus learning a trade from him. In the same way a new trade is learned by those who work with the tailor and the weaver when they come round. They have not, it is true, acquired a

technical knowledge of a *part* of a trade, such as would be demanded from them when working in a factory,—where, for example, in the modern system, but very few men would be able to make the whole of a pair of boots,—and they know nothing of machinery; but they have acquired a “handiness,” and a capacity for appreciating work that is done well and conscientiously, that are of inestimable value when their labour is transferred to regular factories in towns. The making of carts and waggons, buckets, casks, and many agricultural implements gives the young Austrian farm labourer an almost daily lesson in some new trade.

Before returning to the house, my host took me to see his eldest son and his wife; but, with the true yeoman’s unflagging industry, the former was then at the other end of the farm, superintending his men in some field-work that had to be finished before night. When his marriage was arranged, the Bauer had realised that the old Dowerhouse would be quite unsuited for the future residence of his son’s town-bred wife, and it had therefore been practically rebuilt, and was furnished by the bride’s father with new Viennese furniture like that now sold in Paris or London. The young wife herself was bright and pleasing, as Austrian women generally are, her dress simply and tastefully made, and her hair arranged like that of any town girl of the higher classes in Vienna or Paris. But, nevertheless, on

glancing again at the grand-looking old Bauer who had just before been explaining to me the patriarchal life and customs that had made up the existence of his family for generations, one could not help regretting that such extremes of town culture and old-fashioned, solid worth should have met here. They cannot blend, and one is almost inclined to doubt whether the best that modern culture and modes of thought can bring will adequately replace the old-fashioned sterling qualities of simple, unostentatious dignity which they will almost certainly banish for ever.

Hardworking though the Austrian Bauers, rich and poor, unquestionably are, incessant labour is by no means their only occupation, and social gatherings play no small part in their existence. Here, again, we find that a rigid line must be drawn between the customs of even the poorest of the noble landowners and the wealthiest of the Bauers. As among very many of the richest of the old-fashioned peasantry in France, there is a good deal of the "pride of humility" in the extreme care they take to avoid anything that would look like an imitation of the manners or customs of the nobility, or the town life of the commercial or professional classes. A formal invitation to a dinner or supper is never given. A pretext for asking their friends to come has therefore to be invented, and though the intended supper or dancing-party is never even mentioned, the real object of the invitation is perfectly understood.

An Austrian Bauer is not often at a loss to find some plausible excuse. A message is generally sent some days before to all his "neighbours," many of whom in the mountain districts live miles away. They will be informed that a shed on the Bauer's farm has been destroyed by fire, or that a fence has been blown down, and are asked to be so kind as to come upon a certain day and help to reconstruct it. In many of the forest regions the young green twigs from the upper branches of fir trees are cut and preserved as winter food for cattle. The custom is very ruinous for the trees, but it affords an excuse for one of the most favourite forms of pleasure-making. In this case a number of vigorous young men are invited, who climb the tall trees, and with sharp axes top off the smaller branches, which they throw down to be gathered up by the girls, who work as hard as the lads in the trees above them. A good deal of rough play goes on, and merry songs are sung, and when evening comes and the work is over a welcome hot supper is provided, and singing and dancing follow as a matter of course. Customs such as these among the poorer Bauers often partake of the nature of co-operation and mutual aid with some really practical object in view, such as I have described. Among the more wealthy, however, the guests are generally asked to "help," as a mere formality, in some easy occupation, such as sorting the fruit that is to be dried for winter use, which the

Bäuerin's household could more easily have done without the aid of her neighbours.

A friendly gathering of this kind had been arranged by my Bauer host and hostess for the day of my arrival, and on our return to the house the sound of laughter and of merry voices was to be heard from the room where the guests had been at work. The preparations for their hospitable entertainment had given the whole Bauer household full occupation for several days before. This, however, was finished now, and they were all passing the time until the supper-hour in old-fashioned games of various kinds. At length all the guests came into the *Stube* already described, the men looking wonderfully picturesque in their holiday clothes, while the women and girls made a charming picture in their provincial costume. The men all took off their coats on entering the room, and carefully folded them up. Comfort and custom make it quite correct, and, indeed, essential, for the men to take their meals on feast days in their white shirt-sleeves, as these form an important part of their holiday dress indoors. It is the pride of the peasantry to show their good manners on such an occasion as this. The men all seated themselves on the benches on one side of the room with an air of preternatural solemnity, while the women and girls grouped themselves together with an expression of demure meekness upon their faces which contrasted rather amusingly with the merry laughter and romping

games that we had heard a few minutes before. Two of the peasant girls attracted my attention as looking rather different from the others. They were the Bauer's daughter and daughter-in-law, who had donned the national costume so as not to spoil the effect by appearing in ordinary modern dress. The women's costume in this district, as well as in part of Styria, is very striking. They wear rather short brown or blue skirts, buckled shoes, and white woollen stockings. Over their skirts they wear an apron of some gaily coloured material, generally blue embroidered with flowers. The old women still wear curiously shaped caps woven in gold thread, richly embroidered, and ornamented with imitation pearls.

Supper at last was ready, and when the steaming dishes were brought in all the guests gathered round the table, and every sound was hushed while the Bauer in solemn tones said grace. This ceremony is never omitted among the peasantry of all classes, and the form of words used in this and many other parts of Austria is extremely quaint and of very ancient origin.

The Bauer *cuisine* in Austria, like that in Russia, is remarkable for the enormous quantity of butter in which everything is cooked. Meat and poultry, puddings and cakes in endless variety, and the famous *Nödel* in its many forms, some with sweet sauce and brandy, were all cooked in oceans of butter. At length came the

greatest dish of all, the crowning glory of the feast. This is the dessert, which is served in a similar way in rural districts in many parts of Austria and Hungary. It is an ingenious work of art, placed upon a huge wooden dish, and is made up of fresh fruit, nuts, and curious cakes, garnished with flowers, and also, to add to the fun, with cunningly concealed sprigs of thorns and stinging nettle, while the whole is ornamented with a number of bows of brightly coloured ribbons. It is, in fact, adorned very much as are the dishes, which, in the rural districts of Austria as well as in Bohemia and Russian and Austrian Poland, are taken to the church on certain *fête* days to be blessed by the priest. There is nothing sacred, however, attaching to this dish. It is ceremoniously carried in by the head farm servant, who, knowing what is coming, grasps it with a firm hand. At a signal from the Bauer, a rush is made for it by all the young men and maidens, and any other of the guests who are daring enough to venture into the *melée*. In a moment all its beauty is destroyed in the fierce scramble that ensues, and when, a few minutes later the thorn-protected fortress has been stormed and sacked, the victors and vanquished in the fight console themselves, for the wounds their hands have received, with the coffee—no where more delicious than in Austria—which is next brought in.

And now that the feast is over, good manners

demand that the guests should assume once more their air of preternatural solemnity, while each in turn approaches the Bauer and Bäuerin, and thanks them in conventional and time-honoured phrases for their good supper, while the host and hostess thank each in similar set phrases for his or her good company. This tribute to good breeding and rural etiquette having been duly paid, the serious demeanour of the guests is once more thrown to the winds, and a new phase of Austrian character takes its place. The massive table is pushed aside, and amateur musicians take their places at the end of the room. A strange medley of instruments—zithers, violins, anything that comes to hand—strikes up an air as wild as the winds that whistle among their forest pines, or rush roaring over their Alpine crags, to sink at length exhausted in fitful sobs in their sheltered valleys. The dancing begins—but what dancing! Can these be the same stolid peasants who labour so ardently from dawn till nightfall, whose pride it is to provide all the necessaries of life for themselves by their own untiring industry, and who hold themselves proudly aloof from the pleasures of the classes above them? In every part of the Empire, and among every race, the peasant dances throw a flood of light upon the national character. In the wild enthusiasm of the dance all restraint is thrown aside, and even among the German-speaking peasantry of Austria one is often almost startled by the sudden trans-

formation. It is, perhaps, not altogether a fanciful idea of the Austrians themselves that the rapid transitions, which in the peasant dances seem to represent almost every phase of human passion and emotion, are due to the strangely mingled ancestry from which the people themselves are descended, and that at such moments the influence of long-forgotten tribes, dating from prehistoric times, once more asserts itself.

It is only, however, when the peasants are dancing in their own homes, and for their own pleasure alone, that these latent traits of character are revealed. However wild and boisterous the dancing may be when intended as a spectacle for visitors, the real poetry of it is wholly lost. The mere presence of a stranger generally suffices to destroy completely the absolute forgetfulness of themselves, and of all their ordinary life and surroundings, which renders dancing, for the Austro-Hungarian peasantry, a most effective means of portraying every phase of human feeling and passion.





CHAPTER IV

RURAL LIFE IN HUNGARY

IN the spring of 1867 a number of workmen might have been seen busily engaged in forming a mound of earth upon the open space in front of the grand suspension bridge over the Danube, uniting the two towns of Pesth and Buda. The earth of which that mound was formed had been brought from all the more important municipalities in Hungary. Just simple earth, and nothing more, but, none the less, for the imaginative and poetic Hungarians it had a significance that was more precious in their eyes than pearls or rubies. From every district of the kingdom, from the wide plains of the Alföld, from the Carpathian Mountains, and the distant provinces of Transylvania, Croatia, and Slavonia, nobles and peasants had flocked to the capital of the Hungarian kingdom. Ravaged by Mongol and Turkish invaders, oppressed and misgoverned for centuries by Austria, crushed into subjection less than twenty years before by the united forces of Austria and Russia; after all her vicissitudes, Hungary had at length become practically an

independent kingdom, free at last to work out her destinies in her own way. The cannon boomed from the ancient castle of Buda, when a long and gorgeous procession made its way over the bridge; bishops and priests in their rich vestments, Magyar magnates and nobles in their national gala costumes, embroidered with gold and crusted with precious stones, and—most picturesque figure of all—the Emperor Francis Joseph as the Apostolic King of Hungary, in his coronation robes, wearing the Iron Crown of St. Stephen, and mounted upon a white charger shod with golden horse-shoes. Slowly the procession advanced, until at length the King rode to the summit of the mound, to which every province had contributed its quota, and, waving the sword of St. Stephen to the four quarters of the compass, swore to protect the kingdom henceforth against all its foes, and preserve inviolate its constitutional freedom. The vast crowd of spectators, whose breathless emotion had kept them silent until then, gave vent to a thundering *Eljen*, which almost drowned the roar of the cannon from the castle of Buda, and Hungary was once more a kingdom, in fact as well as in name.

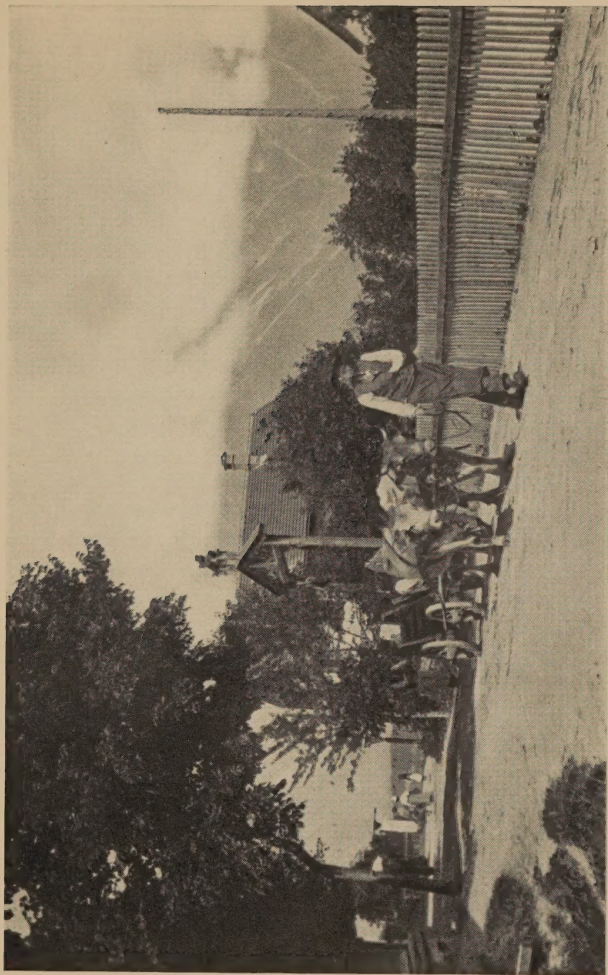
We shall see in later chapters something of the progress that Hungary has made since that memorable day in 1867, and of the life led in the capital and larger towns; but we will now follow in imagination one of the spectators back to his country home, where on every side we shall find

much that is new and interesting, untouched as yet by the more or less cosmopolitan influences that are inseparable from urban districts.

As I have already said, the Magyars are the dominant race in Hungary to fully as great a degree as the Austrian Germans are in the Cisleithan half of the Dual Monarchy. An ethnological map of the Hungarian kingdom has a somewhat curious appearance. In the centre is a large area of the shape of a roughly drawn triangle, with its base to the north and its apex to the south. This central portion of the kingdom is inhabited mainly by Magyars, while the intervening space between this Magyar region and the Hungarian frontier forms a border of varying width, completely surrounding the Magyar "triangle," inhabited chiefly by various minor races. On the west there is a small patch where the German-speaking Austrians and Styrians have spread over the frontier. On the north, the wide band between the Magyars and the Carpathian Mountains is occupied principally by Slovaks and Ruthenians. A far larger space on the east, containing the Hungarian province of Transylvania, is inhabited chiefly by Wallachs or Roumanians; but in the centre of Transylvania is another large district inhabited by Magyars, and adjoining it a detached population of German origin, the Transylvanian Saxons. The southern portion of Hungary up to the Austrian frontier on the west is peopled mainly by Slavs of Croatian or Serbian

origin. Within the large central triangle lies the greater part of the wide Hungarian plain known as the Alföld, with which the Magyar race is always especially associated. It is here that the national characteristics are most strongly marked, and I will therefore suppose that we have accepted an invitation to visit a *Táblabíró*—a Magyar noble whose fortune and social position would correspond with that of a small squire or country gentleman in England—residing in this district. Warm-hearted hospitality is one of the many pleasing traits in the Hungarian character, and it will assuredly not be the fault of our Magyar host if his guests do not carry away with them many pleasant memories of their sojourn in his country dwelling.

The train from Pesth will convey us for a part of our journey, but we shall have a long drive on leaving the nearest station—a fortunate circumstance, as it is only thus that the visitor can form any real idea of the peculiar character and the immensity of this vast plain. So far as physical features are concerned, there is not much variety; there is the same wide plain for ever, the same unending cornfields, and the uneven track that does duty for a road. But, nevertheless, a long drive in the Alföld has charms of its own that explain the passionate love of the Magyars for their land, as intense as that of sailors for the sea. In fact, though in the Alföld, as upon the sea, the physical features are always the same, they vary



A ROAD SCENE.

constantly in their aspect, not only at different seasons, but at different hours of the day. In midwinter it may present itself as an ocean of snow, often borne by the wind in billowy masses, which sometimes sweep upward in columns that seem to touch the black, swiftly flying clouds above. A few hours later it may have changed to a glittering maze of opalescent colours, succeeding one another as the day wears on, till at length the sunset bursts forth in all its glory, and casts floods of light of every imaginable hue upon the crystalline snow. But I will suppose that our journey is made in early summer, when colours no less brilliant are frequently presented on every side by the marvellous profusion of flowers. Often, too, especially in the hottest period of the year, the visitor is fortunate enough to witness the so-called *Deli-báb*, a wonderful mirage in which Nature seems to show that in Hungary she is capable of creating imaginary scenes as wildly fantastic as any that ever presented themselves to the mind of even the poetic Magyar.

The villages that we pass upon our way are, as a rule, few and far between, and in the intervening space of this sparsely populated country we should meet only with isolated farms, or the estates of noble proprietors. The large villages often possess a population of many thousands; but these I shall refer to again when describing Hungarian life in provincial towns. Whether large or small, however, they are nearly all built

upon the same plan. In the centre there is usually a wide, open space, near which will be found the church and other public buildings of the village. The peasants' cottages are usually built separate from one another, with sometimes a garden gay with flowers in front. The Magyars have the reputation for disliking trees, and, unlike the Austrian peasantry, they very rarely plant them near their cottages as a protection against lightning or for the sake of the shade. Like the Russian *izbas*, the Hungarian peasant cottages consist of one floor only; but they are larger, better built, and have generally a loft beneath the roof. Unlike the Russian and most Slavonic races, however, the Magyar prefers to build his cottage with the gable facing the road. One side of the roof generally projects far beyond the wall, and, as in the Austrian Bauer's house I have described, it thus forms an agreeable shelter from the sun in summer. On seats beneath the shade of this overhanging roof the affairs of the village and the outer world, and perchance the virtues or shortcomings of the neighbours, are freely discussed.

The life of the Magyar peasant does not entail any very arduous labour in the rich, light soil of the Alföld, and in some seasons of the year time is apt to hang heavily upon his hands. Fortunately for him, his capacity for gossiping and relating stories from the wild, weird folk-lore of his race is equal to his passionate love of music and dancing,

and hence the *Szóhordó* (as these seats are called) is constantly referred to in stories of Hungarian village life in a sense corresponding to the "ingle-nook" as a spot in which these legends are suitably narrated. The cottages are generally whitewashed, but those of the richer peasants are often painted in crude tints of red, green, or blue—forming patches of colour that from a distance have frequently a very artistic effect.

Continuing our route, the residence of our friend at length comes in sight. A group of a few trees in the far distance first strikes the eye, looking almost out of place on this widespread plain, where we may travel for many miles without meeting a single object higher than the gable of a peasant's cottage. During the last half-century the Government has made vigorous efforts to encourage the planting of trees in the Alföld district, and many of the noble proprietors have tried, but not hitherto very successfully, to set an example to the peasantry by planting a few near their own residences. Presently the house itself becomes visible. It seems at the first glance to be only a magnified edition of the peasants' cottages that we have already seen, with the same sloping roof, covered with shingles, and the same low walls, for, like the peasants' houses, it consists of the ground floor only. On nearer approach we find that it is separated from the road by neat and solid wooden palings; the lawn is well kept, the carriage-drive is in good order,

and in the garden are masses of flowers and shrubs. As soon as our carriage stops, our host and hostess, the Count and Countess S——, who have been watching for us, make their appearance, and a moment later the whole family, two daughters, a son, Count Ferdinand, — an ardent politician, — and a nephew who is on a visit, hasten into the garden, and give us a cordial welcome.

There is a breezy air of *bonhomie* about the Magyar noble of the *Táblabíró* rank that is in striking contrast with the self-conscious demeanour of the Polish nobles or the somewhat more cultivated “society” manners of the small Austrian landed proprietors, and Count S—— is a good specimen of his class. The Pole is inclined to apologise every moment for the absence of something or other that his visitor would never have expected or missed, and constantly explains that “in the present unhappy condition” of his country, his friends—to his great regret—must, like the Poles themselves, put up with the loss of many things that they have a right to expect. The Magyar is exactly the reverse. He knows that the shortcomings of his own country are patent to every one, and he makes no attempt to conceal them. He is perfectly certain that the Magyar race is destined to occupy a very high position among European peoples, and, unlike the Polish noble, he has the very best opinion of the peasantry around him, and, above all, of him-

self and his belongings. As a rule he is decidedly progressive, at least in his ideas, although circumstances compel him for the present to live to a great extent as his fathers for generations lived before him.

On entering the house, we find that it is considerably larger than one would have supposed at the first glance. There is a spacious entrance-hall, the walls of which are covered with trophies of the chase, amid which the heads of deer, wolves, and boars figure largely. In the place of honour is a magnificent bear, standing erect and holding a lamp, and beside it an exceedingly interesting case of stuffed birds. Many of these specimens, I should explain, the Count has brought from Transylvania, still a paradise for the naturalist, where his brother-in-law has a large estate. From the entrance hall a long corridor runs back through the house, communicating with a number of rooms on each side. Near the end is a second corridor, which runs at right angles across the principal one, and communicates in the same way with rooms in the two wings at the back of the house. There are two kitchens—one for winter, in the house and partly underground, while the other, which is only used in summer, is in a building apart on the other side of a small brick-paved yard.

One notices frequent resemblances between the household arrangements in rural Russia and in Hungary. Widely different as is the Hungarian

character from that of the Russians, there is much in the life of Hungarian nobles of moderate fortune that reminds us of resident Russian landowners of a corresponding class. At the same time there are many striking contrasts. One of these presents itself to us in the home life of Count S—— as soon as lunch is served. Besides the family and ourselves, the farm bailiff, and another superior servant belonging to the estate seat themselves, in their ordinary working dress and quite as a matter of course, at the bottom of the table. They appear to be perfectly at their ease, and though they take no part in the general conversation, or in the jokes and merry laughter of the family party at the upper half of the long table, they answer seriously and respectfully, but without the least embarrassment, whenever the *Nagyságos úr* good-humouredly addresses some kindly remark to them. This Old-World custom, though now less frequent than formerly, is still to be met with in many of the more remote rural districts of Hungary and Transylvania, and is typical of the wide difference of character between the Magyar provincial nobles and those of Austro-Germanic or Polish race. The Hungarian *Táblabíró* does not regard his personal management of his property as a grievance, like the Polish resident landowner, or, like the Austrian, as one of the necessary evils of life that is constantly interfering with his amusements. In the country household of a Magyar noble of limited fortune

there are many departments that are personally superintended by his wife and daughters as a matter of course. The management of the dairy, the poultry-yard, and a multiplicity of duties connected with the storing of provisions for winter use, all fall to their share of the daily labour. The estate is, in fact, almost as much a little self-supporting kingdom as is that of the Bauer in Austria or of the resident Russian noble. The same economic conditions necessarily bring about similar results, and here, as in Russia, from the scarcity of ready money, the badness of the roads, which render transport for any great distance difficult, especially in spring and early winter, together with the cheapness of local labour, the landowners are led to rely as far as possible upon their own resources in providing for nearly all their requirements. This, of course, is far easier outside the limits of the Alföld, in such regions as Transylvania, where forests and mountains supply a great variety of raw materials, than it is in this wide, stoneless, and treeless plain.

The *Táblabíró* noble of the present day differs widely from the lawless class described in Jókai's novels. He is often well-read, and generally an excellent linguist. In Hungary, and, indeed, more or less throughout the whole of Eastern Europe and Russia, a knowledge of English has come to be regarded of late years as essential to the education of members of the higher classes, and almost as a distinguishing feature of those

who can claim admission into "society." "How funny it sounds to hear working people and servants talking English!" said a Hungarian lady to me one day, when visiting London for the first time. "It makes me feel as if they must all be ladies and gentlemen." Very many of the *Táblabíró* class of landowners belong by descent to some of the oldest and most influential families in Hungary, but, notwithstanding, the majority hold aloof from the society of the great magnates. In spite of all the efforts of the large landowners to prove their patriotism, they have so long been associated with the Court life of Vienna that they have to a great extent become discredited among the smaller proprietors as well as the peasantry. Very many among them are absentees; a larger proportion have intermarried into families of Austrian or foreign nobles, and as a result, though often quite as much devoted to the well-being of Hungary as the most patriotic *Táblabíró*, their influence is far less than might be supposed from the enormous area of their estates. This, perhaps, is a fortunate circumstance for small Hungarian landowners in the present transition state of their country's development, as it relieves them from temptations to reckless extravagance which have proved ruinous to many of their class in Austria as well as in Russia.

The labourers upon the farm are divided into two classes, known as *béres* and *betyars*. The first are engaged for the whole year, the latter for

a few months only when their services are required. The *betyars* have consequently more time at their own disposal, and in former days contributed numerous recruits to the brigand bands by which many parts of Hungary were infested a generation or two ago. In the dark days of Hungarian history that followed the fruitless rising in 1848, the brigands were regarded with no little sympathy, not only by the peasantry, but even by many of the landowners who suffered by their depredations, as they appeared to be keeping up a kind of guerrilla war with the Government of Vienna. *Betyar* consequently acquired a second meaning in the Magyar language, and is now applied as a compliment to the best dancers among the peasantry, and especially to those most highly favoured by the fair villagers. Until 1848 a large proportion of the Hungarian peasants were nominally serfs, but their condition was even then widely different from that of the Russian *Moujik*, as they were always perfectly free to quit the noble landowner's estate whenever they pleased. They held their land, in fact, on the condition of paying the proprietor a fixed sum annually in money, besides giving him a certain amount of labour for the cultivation of his land. Besides those who were thus bound to render personal service, there was also a numerous class of peasants who had held their land from time immemorial, subject only to the payment of a fixed rental. In 1848 the land occupied by both

these classes was handed over as freehold property to the tenants, the landlords receiving compensation from the State.

Another class of Hungarians, however, must be mentioned, who, though really "peasants" so far as their social condition and their fortune were concerned, belonged nevertheless to the *Nemes ember*, or noble class. When in 1848 their most highly cherished privilege was abolished—exemption from direct taxation—they amounted to more than five per cent. of the total population of the kingdom. Indeed, there are very many villages in Hungary in which the whole population is "noble."

The freedom that the Magyar peasant has long enjoyed from anything resembling the crushing form of serfdom that formerly existed in Russia has unquestionably had an immense influence upon his character. Besides this, the Magyar peasant, like the Magyar noble, never forgets that he belongs to the dominant race. There is often a touch of good-humoured insolence in his treatment of peasants of other nationalities, and especially in his relations with the Jews and the Gipsies. Partly, perhaps, from this feeling of pride, though never afraid of hard work, the Magyar is seen at his best when employed with men of other nationalities. In such a case he throws his whole strength and energy into his work, and would feel himself deeply humiliated if it were not evident that he has done more in a

given time than the men of "inferior" race. This element in the Magyar character is one of no little national importance, and, as we shall see when dealing with the development of Hungary in recent years, the variety of races inhabiting the country, notwithstanding all its disadvantages, leads also to a healthy competition in almost all the walks of life that plays no small part in the progress the nation is making.

But no sketch of Hungarian rural life would be complete without an allusion to the amusements of the peasantry. Notwithstanding their intense love for music, the Magyar peasants very rarely play any musical instrument except the *tilinka*, or flageolet. In the realm of music they are quite willing to yield the palm to the Gipsies, and, indeed, both peasants and landed proprietors of the rank of our friend Count S—— are most liberal patrons of the ubiquitous Czigány. The well-known Hungarian dance, the *Czardas*, derives its name from the Magyar word for a roadside inn. Here the peasants assemble on *fête* days and holidays, and it is on such occasions that the dance is seen under the most picturesque and favourable conditions. The *Czardas* is, in fact, a romantic poem, in which, with the Czigány as musical interpreters, and the Magyar peasants as actors, there is a whole drama of love, jealousy, and reconciliation, culminating in a veritable tempest of movement, the effect of which is increased by the picturesque costumes of the dancers.

The complete national costume is seldom worn by the peasantry except on holidays. Their ordinary working dress in summer is a short linen skirt with wide sleeves, and a pair of loose linen trousers, fastened tightly round the waist and just reaching the high-topped boots called *csizmák*. On holidays the costume consists of a short jacket, often braided, and tight trousers, both generally of blue cloth, high-topped boots, and a hat that is frequently decorated with bunches of flowers. In winter a sheepskin jacket is generally worn, with the leather side outwards, often embroidered with silk of various colours in very curious designs. The costume of the Magyar women, though everywhere the same in its more important features, varies a good deal in different districts. It generally consists of a white linen bodice, with large, loose sleeves, and a short white skirt of the same material, over which is worn a large dark-blue apron with a coloured border. The boots, which resemble those worn by the men, are frequently made of bright red leather. Married women generally have their heads covered with a coloured handkerchief, while among the higher classes a richly embroidered cap is often worn. Unmarried women, however, invariably go bareheaded, disdaining any protection against the hottest sun in summer or the frequently terrible cold of winter. In the latter season both men and women wear the long, cumbrous sheepskin cloak known as the *bunda*.

But to return to our host and his family. The day's duties are over, and after supper we are seated in the drawing-room, where coffee, dried fruit, and a variety of home-made cakes and sweets are handed round. In our honour the Countess and her daughters have donned their national costume. This, unfortunately, is now much less frequently worn by the aristocracy than it was a few years ago. In the old days, before Hungary acquired her political independence, the use of the national costume had a distinctly patriotic signification, and was very generally adopted as one of the most striking modes of impressing the aspirations of the people upon the Austrian Government. But now the battle has been won, and it is the chief preoccupation of the Hungarians to prove to the world that they are fitted to take their place in the ranks of modern nations.

“Though Hungary, as a kingdom, is but a creation of yesterday,” said the young Count, “it must not be forgotten that we belong to what is believed to be the most ancient of civilised peoples. The Magyars are descended from the Turanian race, which not only comprises the Chinese, the oldest of living nations, but of which the Chaldeans, as has now been proved by the discoveries of late years, were also members. Doubtless, among ourselves, as well as among our Turanian kinsmen, the Finns and the Turks, there has been a great admixture of other races in

the seven thousand years that have elapsed since the Chaldean Turanians first left their ancient home—probably in the Ural Mountains—and settled in the plain between the Euphrates and the Tigris three thousand years before the time of Abraham; but, nevertheless, there are, even now, many traces to be found in our Magyar language that curiously correspond with the ancient Chaldean which your great Oriental scholars, Sir Henry Rawlinson and George Smith, have restored to life. We are, it is true, among the smallest of European nations, but, nevertheless, the great division of the human race to which we belong is the most numerous of all. The Turks, who take their name from Tur, or Tura, the mythical founder of the Turanian race, we have always regarded as closely akin to ourselves, though for so many centuries our oppressors. It is a curious coincidence that, almost at the same time that we obtained our freedom as a nation, another Turanian race, the Japanese, awakened from their long sleep of ages on the other side of the globe, and entered the ranks of civilised peoples. There is a movement among the dry bones in the progressive ideas of the Young Turkish Party that may perchance raise their country to a position of wealth and intellectual influence. Even among the four hundred millions of Turanians in China there are signs of an awakening from the moral catalepsy in which they have been slumbering for thousands of years, while the Tu-

ranian Finns in Russia are fighting a stubborn battle to maintain the individuality of their race. Perhaps, after all, the future of the world will not be controlled by the Aryan race alone—even with the aid of the Semitic Jew. The Magyars are by far the most advanced of all the vast family of Turanian peoples; but unless their origin is borne in mind, the real character of Magyar patriotism will never be rightly understood. We are glad to benefit by all the progress that has been made by Aryan races during our long period of intellectual lethargy, but in adapting it to our own needs we never forget that we are grafting the fruits of their labours upon an intelligence which, among some branches of our race at least, had reached a high degree of culture before the first stone of the Egyptian pyramids had been laid.

“Of all the Aryan races, it is with the Anglo-Saxons that we are most in sympathy. As you have found, English is spoken by nearly all the higher class of Magyars, and we have never forgotten the encouragement we received from England and America in our struggle for national independence. At this moment the same sympathy is felt for our near kinsmen, the Finns, in their determined efforts to escape absorption by Slavonic Russia. Turanian Japan is now an ally of England, and the two great Anglo-Saxon peoples are using all their influence to save Turanian China from the domination of the Slavs.”

As we listen to the conversation of our host and

his family in their far-away home in the Hungarian Alföld, we are bound to admit that, though Hungary is only now stepping out of the Middle Ages into the world of modern life and progress, there is nothing that strikes us as incongruous in the transition. The old *Táblabíró* has, it is true, many ideas that belong rather to a by-gone period of his country's history, and this he is intelligent and broad-minded enough to realise for himself. His son, however, who has recently finished his university education, is a type of the newer generation, full of enthusiasm, and a firm believer in a glorious future that is in store for the Magyar race. He is about to take a tour through Germany, Denmark, and Holland, for the purpose of learning the latest improvements in agriculture and dairy farming, and anxiously inquires if England is likely to afford a market for such produce. The nephew, a civil engineer, is filled with new and brilliant ideas for covering the Alföld with a network of irrigation canals that will, he believes, endow the marvellous soil of this wide plain with a fertility equal to that of Egypt, while the Countess and her daughters are chatting about the latest English novels, or the most striking articles in our reviews. And as we rise to retire to our rooms, a sudden gust of wind and a rattle of dust upon the window-panes almost startlingly remind us that we are not in England, but in a lonely country house in the heart of the Hungarian Alföld.



CHAPTER V

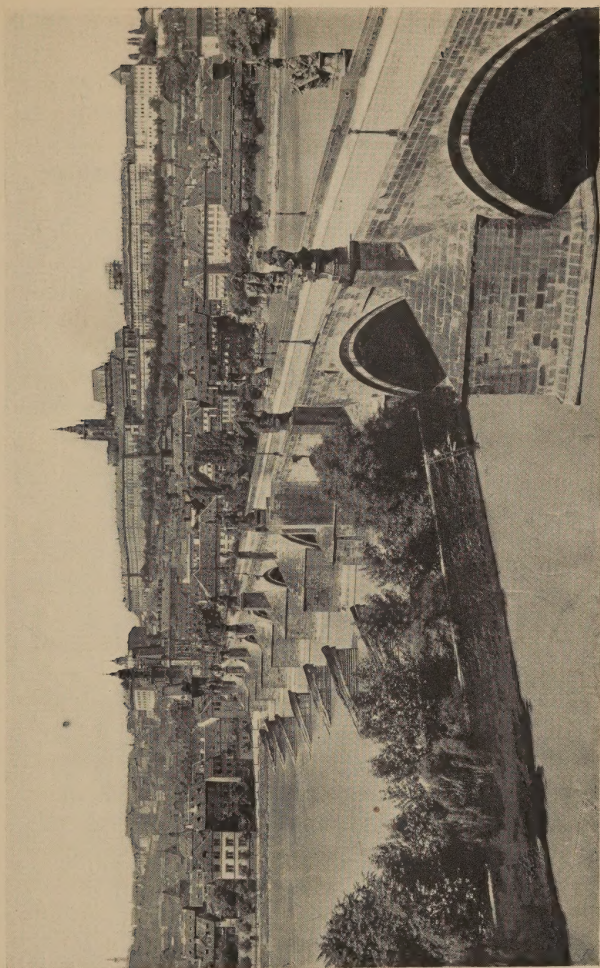
THE NORTHERN SLAVS

THERE is always something that strongly appeals to the heart of the Anglo-Saxon in the struggle of a brave people to maintain its own distinct nationality in the face of seemingly overwhelming odds. This feeling of sympathy is vastly increased where, as in the case with the Czechs, they can look back upon a past of which they are justly proud, and above all, when they are proving, as the Czechs are doing in our own day, that they still possess all the qualities required to hold a high place among European nations in art and literature, as well as in commerce and industry. The modern Czechs plead, and not unnaturally, that a race which has undergone all the sufferings which they endured in their long struggle for national independence, until their final overthrow in the battle of the White Hill, and which nevertheless maintains its best national characteristics undiminished, has at least earned the right to live without danger of absorption by more powerful neighbours.

The Czechs are, in fact, by far the most capable

and progressive of all the Slavonic races in the Dual Monarchy. Hard-working and intelligent, they represent one of the most valuable factors in the development of modern Austria, and the high position held by them in industry, in the universities, in literature, art, and music, proves conclusively that they are no unworthy descendants of the old Bohemian Reformers whose misfortune it was to have been born a few centuries in advance of their time.

The Czechs in Bohemia and Moravia, together with the nearly allied race of the Slovaks, who inhabit mainly the north-western portion of Hungary, are the most numerous Slavonic race in the Dual Monarchy. Exceeding the Magyars in number by nearly a million, if we count the Slovaks as belonging to the Czechs, and, at least in Bohemia and Moravia, advancing even more rapidly in manufactures and material development, it is not surprising that the Czechs should eagerly look forward to the day when Bohemia will be once more a kingdom with a status equal to that of its Hungarian neighbour. The Czech population of Bohemia is, in fact, a highly important barrier to the aspirations of the Chauvinists in the German Empire, who dream of a German Fatherland that will extend to the Black Sea as well as to the Adriatic. The animosity of the Czechs to the Austrian Germans residing among them, the sympathies of many of whom are admittedly with their Teutonic kinsmen, is by



A VIEW OF PRAGUE.

no means unnatural. For the Czechs, the maintenance of their language is no mere question of sentiment alone. It is regarded by them as their greatest safeguard against their final absorption in the Greater Germany of the future. "Once let the Czechs become thoroughly Germanised," they argue, "and Bohemia, with the other Germanic provinces of Austria, will inevitably fall like a ripe fruit into the hands of the Germans when the next storm bursts upon the dominions of the House of Hapsburg." Unfortunately for the Czechs, however, the Germans dwelling among them—new-comers from the Fatherland as well as Austrians—not only form more than a third of the total population of Bohemia, but have almost complete control of their commercial, industrial, and financial affairs.

But, leaving politics for the moment, the visitor to Bohemia, and more especially to the remoter districts, cannot fail to be charmed with one aspect of the life of the people which plays no small part in keeping up the feeling of distinct nationality. The wearing of the national costume among the Czech peasantry has for them a special patriotic significance. In the larger towns and in the more advanced districts, which are generally the only parts of the country seen by the ordinary tourist, the wearing of the national costume is, it is true, less universal. This is not due to any lack of patriotic sentiment, but on account of the rapid development of industries in Bohemia. In

all parts of the world national costumes, especially those worn by men, become rapidly modernised, and soon disappear where the wearer is engaged in factory labour. A national costume forms an intrinsic part of the Old-World life that vanishes at the touch of modern progress, and its incongruity becomes evident to the most conservative mind; but in the remoter districts it is almost universally worn by the peasantry, and nothing could be more picturesque than the blaze of colour presented by the costumes of the peasant women on a Sunday or *fête* day in their village church, or in some quaint old Bohemian town, where the ancient architecture of the houses and churches, even less than the dress of the people, seems to carry us back to the age of Huss and Zizka.

The Bohemian nobles and aristocracy became so completely Germanised after the final conquest of the country by Austria in the seventeenth century, that their mode of life at the present day differs but little from that of the same section of society in Austria. It is among the middle and lower classes, and, above all, among the peasantry, that the most typical traits of the national character are met with. For a large proportion of the Czech peasantry the development of the national industries is a matter of life and death. Perhaps nowhere in Europe is the cultivation of small holdings more carefully and systematically carried on than in Bohemia; but these peasant farms are so small that, with the increasing popu-

lation, they would form an altogether inadequate means of support were it not for the numerous household industries that are carried on in almost every village, and the earnings that are gained by some members of the family by factory labour. The increasing number of industrial centres in many different localities renders this resource available to an increasing proportion of the peasantry. As is almost invariably the case, however, where the workers in factories are partly supported by the labour of their families on their agricultural holdings, the wages are small indeed from a British point of view. In the textile industries few men earn more than nine or ten shillings a week for a ten-hour day, while the women and girls receive from four to six shillings. Even these starvation wages are higher than could be obtained upon the estates of landed proprietors. Yet one rarely meets with evidences of squalid poverty among these Bohemian villagers. The little cottages are usually trim and clean, and the general air of well-being often seems to be quite out of proportion to the smallness of the family fortunes.

The Czechs in Bohemia and Moravia have unquestionably awakened to a consciousness of their own value among European nations, and they have discovered that by means of education alone their ancient position may perchance be won back to them. In the past the strength of Bohemia lay in the superior instruction of its people. The

University of Prague was at one time attended by twenty thousand pupils, and when, after the battle of the White Hill, the University, together with all the other educational institutions, fell into the hands of the Jesuits, the dispersion of the Protestant professors and preachers all over Europe gave a new impulse to learning and reform in almost every country, including our own. The name of the Moravian preacher and professor, Comenius, will ever be associated with educational reform, while the good work done in the cause of education by the Hussites, who organised the Church known as the "Brethren's Unity," in the fifteenth century, is universally admitted. This religious body, now known as the "Moravian Church," has been engaged in educational and mission work all over the world since its expulsion from Moravia in 1722.

The Czechs no longer dream of realising their national ideals by force of arms. They are taking a surer road to attain their ends by devoting themselves heart and soul to technical education. German capital, it is true, has founded most of their industries, but these depend also upon the skilled labour that the Czechs supply, and little by little the latter are working their way steadily upwards to positions of greater and greater importance in the manufacturing world. Technical, industrial, and trade schools of every kind are now rapidly increasing in number, and are thronged by thousands of young Czech peasants

at night, who eagerly follow the special classes relating to their trades.

The Slovaks, who are so closely akin in race and language to the Bohemian and Moravian Czechs that they are generally classed with them as forming a single nationality, are far more widely spread. The main body of the Slovaks inhabit the north-west of Hungary, but, as is the case with so many other races, there are small groups and communities in many parts of Austria and Hungary, far removed from their special home among the Carpathian Mountains. Even within the Magyar district in Hungary many groups of Slovak villages are to be found, some even in the vicinity of Pesth itself, in which the national language and customs are still preserved unchanged. Though so nearly allied to the Bohemian and Moravian Czechs, who are now almost all Roman Catholics, fully one-half of the Slovaks in Hungary are Protestants. Very many among them claim to be of Moravian origin, and not improbably the prevalence of Protestantism among them may be due to the Czech refugees who fled from Bohemia and Moravia after the destruction of the Protestant cause in the battle of the White Hill. Physically and intellectually, however, the Slovaks are generally inferior to the Czechs properly so called. This, so far as the Carpathian district is concerned, is, perhaps, mainly due to the poverty of the country and the difficulties in the way of education in these

mountain regions. "Poor, hard-working, honest, and superstitious" would sum up the Slovak character, to which must be added, however, the most open-handed hospitality.

Many beautiful districts in the Carpathians are now becoming favourite summer resorts for tourists, and this feature in the Slovak character is an agreeable change from the reception too often met with in many tourist-haunted districts in Switzerland and Germany. The traveller beyond the reach of hotels, however, will have to be content with the simplest fare, for very little beyond black bread and cheese—made from sheep's milk—can even the hospitality of the Slovak peasant provide, except trout, which is almost everywhere obtainable from the mountain streams.

In their far-away homes, the Slovaks retain full belief in many curious superstitions which still hold their ground among the Czechs in the more remote parts of Bohemia and Moravia; another proof of their common origin. Most of these have some connection with Christian *fêtes* or rites at the seasons of Christmas, Easter, or Whitsuntide, or at marriages and baptisms. It is, however, easy to trace their origin to pre-Christian beliefs; and many in varying forms are to be found among all the Slavonic races in Europe. The Christmas customs are exceedingly curious. For many days previously careful preparations are made for the coming festival. To the Slovak, Christmas is not only a season of feasting, but one in which, by

dint of potent spells, the vast army of the invisible world of spirits that haunt every rock and forest tree in his mountain home may be rendered harmless, or even forced to aid him in all the difficulties of his daily life. The cottage is swept, all the furniture and utensils it contains are carefully washed or polished, and the floor is entirely covered with clean straw from the last autumn's harvest, care being taken that it shall lie exactly east and west.

On the afternoon of Christmas Eve the whole household assembles in the living room, and then proceeds to the stable, cowhouse, and barns, in solemn procession, carrying bread and salt and a bowl filled with beans. As the procession slowly passes along, some of these beans are slipped, one by one, into the cracks and crevices in the walls, and a few unintelligible words, said by philologists to be in a dialect of ancient Slavonic, are pronounced as an incantation to protect the house from fire. The bread and salt are destined for the cattle, sheep, pigs, and chickens; no living creature is forgotten, and great is the dismay when any among them refuse the proffered gift, or seem to be alarmed at the magic words that accompany it. Returning to the house, where the Christmas feast has already been placed upon the table, the parents take a bowl of water, sweetened with honey, with which they sprinkle all their unmarried daughters, thus casting a spell that will ensure for them husbands whose sterl-

ing honesty is as transparent as water, and whose tempers are as sweet as the honey it contains. And then another ceremony has to be gone through before sitting down to the feast. The father of the family pours out for every one present a small quantity of *slivovitza*, and, each having sipped, the remainder is poured upon the straw-covered floor as a libation to the "unknown gods." This *slivovitza* is a spirit obtained by the fermentation and subsequent distillation of plums. It is very largely used in many parts of Austria, as well as in Hungary, and especially by members of the Slavonic and Magyar races.

I will mention only one other of their customs—that relating to marriage, as it is common not only to a large proportion of the Czechs, but also to the two other races of Northern Slavs in Austria-Hungary, the Poles and the Ruthenians. Marriages are always arranged by the mediation of two representatives of the family of the would-be bridegroom. These ambassadors, whose object is, of course, perfectly well known, as the day of their visit is arranged beforehand, begin by stating that they are in search of a precious jewel greatly desired by the son of their respected friend. May they have permission to seek for it, as they have reason to believe that it may be found there? This is at once granted, and a regular search commences. The blushing maiden is soon found, and, after a few conventional compliments have been exchanged, she retires, and

the real business begins. Among all the races in Austria-Hungary, as, indeed, among the peasants generally upon the Continent, marriage is before all else a financial question. Among most of the Austro-Hungarian races, however, the bride is not "given away," but "sold." The parents, of course, must give her a dowry proportionate to their means; but, on the other hand, they must receive a compensation from the bridegroom's family in money or in kind for the loss of their daughter. So universal is this custom in Austria-Hungary, especially among the non-Germanic races, that even among classes far above the peasants in rank a present of some value is always made to the parents, when the matter is arranged, as a nominal "payment" for the bride. Among the peasants, however, and more particularly among those of Slavonic and Magyar race, the "payment" is by no means nominal. Among the poorer it is rarely less than two pounds; among the richer, often thirty or forty. It needs long and careful negotiations to adjust exactly the amount of the bride's dowry, which she is to receive from her father, and her "purchase" money, which is payable to her father by her future husband. It happens occasionally that the latter is the larger sum of the two; and should the wife, as happens only too frequently, leave her husband—for many of these mercenary marriages are very far from happy ones—the delicate question arises, What portion, if any, of the purchase

money should be restored to the husband by the father of the bride?

Among the Slovaks, Poles, and Ruthenians the bride generally calls upon all the neighbours the day before her marriage, taking with her a cake. On entering each cottage, she breaks off a piece, which she offers with an invitation to attend her wedding on the morrow. Then follows a more dramatic ceremony. The bride kneels down and begs for a general pardon for any offence she may have committed in the past, in view of the new life she is about to begin, and, finally, before rising she has to receive a benediction from every one present. Among the Slovaks, the night before the wedding all the friends assemble at the bride's house for a supper and the "cake dance." Just before the hour for the guests' departure, however, the uproarious mirth and gaiety cease abruptly. The family is supposed suddenly to remember that they are about to lose the daughter whom her parents have "sold" to her future husband, and custom demands that they should raise a wail like that heard at an Irish funeral. The guests all join in, and, sobbing to the best of their powers, the merrymakers return to their homes.

On the wedding morning the bride, dressed in her gala costume, immediately before leaving for church, is led by her mother to the kneading trough, which is covered with a piece of newly woven fine linen. Upon this she seats herself while the mother cuts off three locks of hair,

which are solemnly burned and the ashes scattered to the winds. In most districts among the Slovaks the bridegroom goes to the bride's house, whence they proceed together to the church. When the service is over, the bridal party returns home somewhat slowly, so as to permit the mother of the bride to arrive first. There is a special object for this. The daughter is now a visitor at her old home, and her mother, as mistress of the house, receives her and the rest of the party as "guests" with the hospitable, time-honoured Slavonic offering of bread and salt. The wedding-party then enters, and remains standing while the bridegroom sheepishly walks three times around the table, which is covered with the most substantial viands that the family fortunes permit. Whatever else may be wanting, cakes of a special form, honey, mead, and particularly *slivovitza*, are always provided.

Nearly allied to the Czechs and Slovaks are the Poles, the most unfortunate of all the Slavonic peoples. One might almost say that the Poles consist of two separate races, so entirely distinct are the nobility from the great mass of the nation. To this complete separation between nobles and peasants nearly all the troubles of Poland have been due in the past. The Polish aristocracy is, in fact, a caste entirely apart from the people. This, it is true, is also the case among the aristocracies of nearly all Continental countries, but in hardly any other nationality is the gulf so wide as

almost to exclude the possibility of mutual feelings of respect. The Austro-German nobles, though no less a caste, are, as a rule, decidedly proud of the Germanic peasantry, and regard them as infinitely superior to those of other races. The Magyar nobles have, perhaps, an even higher opinion of the peasantry of their own nationality. The Polish peasant, on the contrary, is not regarded with greater contempt by the Austrians, Prussians, or Russians than he is, with rare exceptions, by nobles of his own race. Of late years movements have been inaugurated in several directions with the object of diminishing this mutual hostility, but the intention is so evidently political that the Polish peasant is rarely mistaken as to the real significance or practical value of any interest taken ostensibly in his welfare. He has sense enough to know that it is mainly in consequence of the selfish misgovernment and oppression of the nobles in the past that the Polish peasantry have sunk to their present condition of physical and moral degradation. Nothing proves more strikingly how bitter is the feud between the two classes than the result of the attempted Polish insurrection in Galicia in the winter of 1846. It is now known that the Austrian Government was well aware of the plot that the Polish nobles had prepared with the utmost secrecy, and was careful to do nothing to prevent an outbreak, foreseeing what its inevitable result must be. The Polish peasants rose *en masse* against the aristocratic in-

surgents, and the treatment the latter received from the lower orders of their own race was a conclusive proof that though they had but little love for their Austrian rulers, their hatred for the Polish aristocracy was even more intense and deep-rooted.

Throughout the greater part of Austria, Poles from Galicia and Silesia are to be found in all the large towns, and almost everywhere they are as much the pariahs of the working classes as are the members of their race who yearly flock into Germany at harvest-time. In the Polish noble and the Polish peasant respectively the two extremes of aristocratic pride and abject, cringing servility are the most striking characteristics.

The unpopularity of the Polish nobles, however, is by no means confined to the peasantry of their own race. A large part of Galicia, as well as of Bukowina and districts in the north-east of Hungary, is inhabited by Ruthenians, a branch of the Little Russians. Very few of this race rise above the rank of the peasantry, and in Galicia the vast majority of the landowners, as well as of the middle and upper classes generally, are Poles. The hostility of the Ruthenian peasantry toward the Polish landowners is not less than that of the Polish peasantry themselves, but, unhappily for the latter, the unfortunate fact that they, too, are Poles entails for them a share of the hatred felt by the Ruthenians for the Polish nobles and burghers. The Ruthenians, though among the

poorest and most backward of the Austro-Hungarian races, are usually as strong and vigorous as the Polish peasantry now generally are the reverse. To the aversion felt for them as Poles is therefore added, on the part of the Ruthenians, a feeling of profound contempt. Despised and yet feared by their own nobles and the upper classes, oppressed by the Jews who multiplied among them in the old days when they were almost the only intermediaries between nobles and peasants in all their daily dealings, and constantly ill-treated by their more vigorous neighbours, the Ruthenians, whenever they happen to meet at fair or market, the poor Polish peasants have a bad time of it.

That the Ruthenians should bear a grudge against the Poles is not altogether surprising. The vast mass of the Little Russians possess a natural capacity and a manliness of character which, under happier circumstances, might have enabled them to develop into a highly important European nation. The Little Russian race is assuredly not wanting in courage, or love of independence, since from it most of the Russian Cossacks are derived. At the time when all Eastern Europe was trembling at the ever-present danger of Turkish conquest, the light, flat-bottomed boats of the Little Russians repeatedly swept down the Dnieper to the Black Sea, and again and again ravaged the coast towns of the dreaded Turks. More than once the environs of Constantinople itself

were attacked and burned by them. Until the beginning of the sixteenth century they were in close and friendly alliance with Poland, when, unhappily for them, the Polish King, Wladislas Waza, made a secret treaty with their Attaman, or elected chief, by which the latter was to aid him in curtailing the power of the Polish nobles, and to receive in return the principality of Kief, with the right to a seat in the Polish Senate. For some time previously the Jesuits in Poland had been seeking a pretext for imposing Roman Catholicism upon the Little Russians, who were members of the Eastern Church. Before the scheme could be carried out the Polish King died, and the terms of the secret treaty became known. War was at once made by Poland upon the Little Russians, part of whom eventually placed themselves under the protection of Russia, while the remainder, on the right bank of the Dnieper, were reduced to a condition of the most cruel serfdom by the Poles.

The majority of the Ruthenians in Austria are now members of the Greek Catholic Church. The poverty of the Ruthenians is greatly due to the extreme subdivision of their holdings and the want of education. Although they form nearly half the population of Galicia and Bukowina, instruction in the schools has hitherto been rarely obtainable, except through the hated Polish language; but in Hungary many thousands of Ruthenians have become completely "Magyarised." Notwithstanding, they still cling to their

ancient church, and the liturgy is read by their priests in Old Slavonic, while they preach in Magyar.

Closely akin in race as are all these Northern Slavs of Austria-Hungary, Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, and Ruthenians, the troubles they have gone through in the past, the traditionary memories of the injuries they so often inflicted upon one another, and their mutual jealousies will long render the Pan-Slavist movement little more than a sentimental idea, however attractive it may be to a small proportion of the more highly educated members of the various races. Among the people at large the national prejudices are so deeply rooted, and their aspirations for the future so divergent, as to render any common course of action among them practically impossible, at least for long years to come.





CHAPTER VI

THE SOUTHERN SLAVS

THE unfavourable geographical position occupied by the Slavonic races in Austria-Hungary contributes fully as much as their mutual animosities in diminishing the influence that their numbers would otherwise secure for them among the peoples of the Dual Monarchy. Though all the Slavonic races, taken together, hold the foremost place in point of numbers, the two great groups of Northern and Southern Slavs, into which they are divided, are separated by a physical barrier no less insurmountable than is that of their moral incompatibility of character, the result of their hereditary feuds and jealousies. The two great masses of the German and Magyar races project eastward, like a huge promontory, into the vast ocean of the Slavonic world, and, with the Wallachs in Hungary and their kinsmen in the Roumanian kingdom, almost completely cut off the Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, and Ruthenians in the North from the Slavonic peoples of the South. Those who inhabit Austria-Hungary are, ethnographically speaking, mainly of Servian

race, but, notwithstanding this identity of origin, we find reproduced among them divisions, animosities, and jealousies closely resembling those which separate the Northern Slavonic races from one another.

The Southern Slavs in Austria-Hungary are divided into the Slovenes, or Wends, who form the majority of the inhabitants in the south of Styria, in a large part of Carinthia, and over ninety per cent. in Carniola, while in a large number of other districts they form a considerable fraction of the population, and the Croats and Serbs, who inhabit Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia, the south of Hungary, many districts in Transylvania, and the new provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Austro-Hungarian Serbs, who are closely allied to the Croats, are practically identical in race and language with those living in the adjoining kingdom of Servia. The common origin of these two races and the Slovenes is clearly proved by their respective languages, which are, indeed only slight variations or dialects of the original Servian. Notwithstanding this bond of union, however, the differences of religion present an element of disruption fully as serious as any difference of language or nationality could be. The Slovenes, or Wends, are Roman Catholics, as are also the Croatians. The great majority of the Serbs, on the other hand, are members of the Orthodox Church, except in Bosnia, where at an early period of the occupation of the country by

the Turks nearly all the landowners embraced Mohammedanism to save their property from confiscation. The Servian race has, in fact, long been drawn in opposite directions by the contending influences of Eastern and Western civilisations. In the early days of Servian history the native sovereigns constantly sought the support of the Western Powers in their resistance to the supremacy of the Eastern Empire. It was by Pope Gregory VII. that the Grand Zupan of that date was first recognised as "King" of Servia. By force of arms and skilful diplomacy, the Servian dominions in the middle of the fourteenth century embraced Bosnia, Albania, the greater part of Roumelia and Bulgaria, besides, from time to time, portions of Southern Hungary and Wallachia, while the Servian King, Stephan Dushan, assumed the title of Emperor of the Roumelians. Notwithstanding the conflict with the Eastern Empire which this development of the Servian kingdom necessarily entailed, the Serbs were no less firmly resolved never to submit to the domination of the Church of Rome. From this early period until now, for the great majority of the Servian people national patriotism and devotion to the Oriental Church have been almost synonymous. That the Serbs of the present day, free at last from the oppression of the Turks, should dream of a restoration of their ancient kingdom is natural enough, yet with this aspiration is also bound up a passionate desire for the supremacy,

in their own land, of the Orthodox Church, which has always proved the strongest bond of union among the Slavs. So strong is this feeling that among the Southern Slavs in Austria-Hungary a careful distinction is made in the national costume worn by members of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches. To a certain extent this distinction between the rival creeds has even affected their language. There are many words and phrases current among the Roman Catholics which the Orthodox carefully avoid. Further, members of the Orthodox Church regard it as a religious, as well as a patriotic, duty to encourage the use of the Cyrillian or Old Slavonic characters in all printed matter, while the Roman Catholics, and especially the peasantry, consider the use of books printed in this type to be a mortal sin. As a natural result, these Roman Catholic Serbs, notwithstanding their common origin, disclaim all connection with their Orthodox neighbours, and, calling themselves *Latinski*, but very few among them are inclined to regard with favour the aspirations of the *Pravoslavs*, or Orthodox, for the development of the great Servian State.

Between the Croats and the Orthodox Serbs there is a perpetual feud, and as recently as September, 1902, serious riots occurred at Agram and several other localities. A newspaper article in a local Servian journal, published in the Croatian capital, reflecting upon the character of the Croats in decidedly "unparliamentary" language,

sufficed to set fire to the inflammable material presented by these national and religious rivalries. The office of the offending newspaper, a Servian bank, and several hundred Servian shops and cafés were destroyed by the enraged Croats. Revolvers were freely used on both sides, and it was not until the arrival of an overwhelming military force that the rioters, who had had the unhappy Serbs at their mercy for nearly forty-eight hours, were finally dispersed.

There is much in the relations of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Slavs of Southern Austria and Hungary that recalls the difficulties that the British Government is occasionally called upon to meet in Ireland. To realise in some degree the complicated difficulties that the Austro-Hungarian Government has to face, I may remind the reader that, though these Southern Slavs bear about the same proportion numerically to the other inhabitants of the Dual Monarchy that the Irish do to the total population of the British Islands, they form, nevertheless, only one of the many conflicting races which compose the Austro-Hungarian people. It is only by a comparison of this kind, which I shall have occasion to make again, that the peculiar conditions of life in Austria-Hungary can be fully estimated. The difficulties presented by the rivalry of the Croats and Serbs is greatly complicated in the province of Bosnia by the existence there of a third creed, the Mohammedan, in addition to the Roman Catholic

and Orthodox. An interesting statement made by M. de Kallay, the Common Minister of Finance, to the Budget Committee of the Austrian Delegation, in January, 1901, threw an instructive side-light upon the enormous difficulties that the Government has to contend with. For example, the Orthodox Servians, especially in the country districts, demand a somewhat more democratic constitution for their Church; but this is opposed by their own Orthodox ecclesiastical authorities. To grant the reform demanded by the laity would excite the most determined opposition on the part of the higher ecclesiastics, and this the Government is most anxious to avoid, as, notwithstanding this difference of opinion in Church matters, their political influence among the people of their own creed is immense. The Government, again, has constantly to stand attacks from both the Roman Catholic and Orthodox parties, each affirming that undue facilities are granted to the other for proselytism. Nor are the Mohammedan Serbs less susceptible. In 1900 the Government was surprised by the sudden and seemingly inexplicable emigration of over seven thousand Mohammedan Serbs. Investigation showed that it was due to a sudden panic resulting from a rumour that they were to be forcibly converted to Orthodoxy. The origin of this rumour, it was afterwards discovered, was the conversion of *one* single Mohammedan, who had been received into the Servian Church at Mostar.

Though the Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs have unquestionably become mingled with other races, it is curious to observe how tenaciously they have clung to some of the more striking customs common to all the members of the Slavonic race. In *Russian Life in Town and Country* I have explained at some length the peculiar aptitude of the Russian Slavs for association, as shown especially in the Village Commune, that curiously democratic organisation that contrasts so strangely with the autocratic government of Imperial Russia. Here, among the Austro-Hungarian Slavs, we find the same natural tendency existing. The village community of the Russian *Moujik*, however, is here replaced by the "House Community" of the Servian race. The construction of these houses varies considerably in different localities, but they are to be found, with the same general characteristics, among the Croats, and even the Slovenes, who for so many centuries have been under the influence of the Germanic races among whom they dwell. In its normal form the Servian communal house consists of a large central building, forming a single room, with the stove in the centre. All round this room, and opening into it, are a number of smaller chambers, each of which is the private dwelling of married members of the community. Fresh rooms are built as the "family" increases; and in some districts communities are to be found consisting of two or three hundred persons.

This curious Slavonic custom greatly aided the Austrian Government in the establishment of the celebrated "Military Frontier" (*Militär Grenze*), an institution somewhat resembling the military colonies of the ancient Romans. It was first founded in the sixteenth century, but was completely reorganised under the Empress Maria Theresa. Its object being to protect the frontier against the incessant raids of the Turks, it was essential for the district to be peopled by a brave and vigorous race, numerous enough to offer an effective resistance to invasion. The lands which these raids in the past had laid desolate were granted to new settlers, who were organised as a military force. In the south of Hungary and in the vicinity of Croatia the military frontier was chiefly peopled by Serbs and Croats, who, in taking up this dangerous duty, formed themselves into "house communities." Each of these received a certain amount of land from the Government, which it held on condition that every man between the ages of eighteen and sixty should be liable at any time to be called out for military service, and that a certain number of men, proportionate to the size of the community, should be under arms for eight months in each year. The lands were held in common, and were cultivated by the military settlers and their families for the equal benefit of all the members.

This military frontier was maintained until 1873, when, in view of the altered condition of

the Turkish Empire, it was finally abolished. But the communities that were formed centuries ago still continue in existence. The farm buildings are still surrounded by a strong palisade, and the common dwelling-house is often a large, well-constructed brick building of one or two stories. On the ground floor is the common kitchen and a state bedroom for the elected "House Father." The other bedrooms, one of which is given to each family, are generally on the first floor, instead of being added as an annex to the central hall, the system usually adopted by the peasant communities outside the military district. The second floor is used as a general storeroom. In the larger communities there are sometimes two or three such dwelling-houses placed side by side, but only one of these contains the common kitchen and dining-hall. The whole community is governed by the "House Father" and "House Mother," who are elected annually by all the members, exactly like the *Starosta* of the Russian communal village.

Until the system was abolished, the *Militär Grenze* extended from Transylvania to the Adriatic, and occupied an area of over seven thousand square miles. The whole district was divided into "regiments," and was entirely under military government. Outside each officer's house a torch was placed, as a beacon, on the top of a pole, and whenever it was necessary to light this as a signal of invasion, the order for the instant mobilisation

of the peasant-soldiers could be conveyed for the entire distance in less than an hour. The "house communities" of the Croats and Serbs in the districts guarded by this nationality, of course, greatly facilitated the task of collecting the men needed for service without delay; but perhaps with no other European race, except the Slavs, would it have been possible to form communities of families, all living for generations under one roof, and working their whole lives through, not for themselves individually, but for the common wealth of all. That the system is unprogressive is obvious, and, though the communities cannot be broken up against the will of the members, who are all copartners in the common property, the law now permits the land to be sold or divided among individual owners. So strong, however, is the traditional tendency of the race, that though association is no longer needed as a protection against an ever-watchful enemy, the system still continues, and probably will continue for many years, though the Government, in the interests of national progress, is doing everything possible to promote and encourage individual ownership.

The near kinship of the Southern Slavs to those of Russia is, however, by no means evinced only by their tendency to form associations. We meet with other evidences of it on every side. The houses of the little proprietors and of the richer peasantry have the same long, low, rectangular form that we should meet with in far-

away Russia or in Poland, and, as in Russia, it is easy to recognise even in the national architecture of the houses in the towns that they, too, are but a development of the original idea that presents itself in its simplest form in the Russian peasant's *izba*. Here in Southern Austria and Hungary the use of whitewash for the outside walls is just as universal as it is among the Russian peasantry, but, under the glowing sun of the South, it generally seems to harmonise far more with its surroundings than it does under the pale-blue sky of Russia, or amid the snows of the North. But the influences that have been at work here for ages are by no means exclusively Slavonic. For thousands of years this corner of Europe has been dominated in turn by many successive nationalities. Within historic times the ancient Romans, the Byzantines, the mediæval Italians, and the Turks have all left traces that are everywhere to be seen. Warmth and bright sunshine seem to be essential to the development of æsthetic taste, and on every side we meet with something that strikes the visitor as more artistic than would be found in the North. In the costumes of the people there is still the unmistakable Slavonic type; but especially among the Croats and Serbs the colours are more brilliant, and the picturesque effect is enhanced by the bearing of the wearers. Their dignified demeanour may have been derived from far-away Northern ancestors, but their classic grace can

only have come from a more sunny clime. To visit a Croatian provincial town on a market or fair day, one might suppose that half the peasant venders of country produce assembled there were well-trained models from an artist's studio. There is nothing glaring or gaudy in their brilliant colours. The most highly cultivated artistic taste could hardly assort them more harmoniously, and in their bearing, and in the groups they form spontaneously, the painter would find ready to hand exactly what he would desire to transfer to his canvas.

To describe the costumes worn in such a polyglot crowd as is often to be seen would be impossible. The Croat women generally wear two wide aprons, one before and the other behind, which, by overlapping, form a skirt—a form of apparel adopted also by Wallachian and Roumanian women. In the Croatian costume the body of the dress is usually a loose-fitting bodice of white linen, with large flowing sleeves. Over the apron-skirt, which varies in colour according to the locality, a third small apron is worn, embroidered with curious designs, evidently of Byzantine origin. Round the waist is wound a wide scarf of the most vivid crimson; above this scarf, a second narrower one, of the same colour, is worn, tied loosely round the breast, and this is generally fastened with a large bow in the centre. The jewellery, that is almost universally worn, consists of silver ear-rings, imitation coral necklaces, silver

pendants, and bracelets, while the feet are shod in bright red or yellow leather sandals, called *opankas*, or with tall top-boots resembling those worn by the Magyar women. The head-dress consists of a semi-transparent fabric, sometimes white and sometimes pale rose, with a richly coloured border. This is fastened to the hair, and the ends hang gracefully down as far as the girdle. Among the Serbs a profusion of gold and silver coins, often representing a considerable sum among the richer peasantry and little proprietors, is very frequently worn upon the head-dress.

The men wear a long white coat, reaching nearly to the knees. The upper part is open in front so as to show the scarlet vest beneath, which is studded with silver buttons, but is fastened round the waist by a broad leather belt, curiously ornamented with metallic or coloured designs. Loose flowing trousers of thin and light material, and high-topped boots or sandals, like those worn by the women, complete the costume. The colours, however, vary immensely, for in every village there is a special fashion which is rigidly adhered to. But among the crowd upon a market day we should see representatives of many other nationalities besides the Croats and Serbs—Wallachs, Bulgarians, Magyars, Morloks from Dalmatia, perhaps a sprinkling of Albanians, and here and there, as a foil to all this brilliant colouring, the long, dark, flowing robes of an

itinerant Jew, gliding noiselessly about among the gaily clad peasantry.

With all their picturesqueness, however, it must be admitted that the Southern Slavs of Austria-Hungary—Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs—are among the most ignorant and superstitious races in the Dual Monarchy. Their condition, so far as education is concerned, has certainly improved of late years; but in one respect the Slovenes, as well as many of the other minor races in Austria, have been placed at a disadvantage by the policy that country has been compelled to adopt in reference to the much-disputed language question. However flattering it may be to minor races for their own language to receive official recognition and be taught in the schools, it is evident that one like Slovenian or Serbo-Croatian is necessarily far less useful for all practical purposes than German would be. At the same time, in view of the well-known aspirations of her Germanic neighbours, who look upon themselves as the "heirs presumptive" to her German-speaking provinces, as well as the Pan-German feeling that prevails so largely among their inhabitants, it is no longer to the interest of Austria to promote the Germanisation of her Slavonic subjects, and especially those occupying the road to the Adriatic. In many of the Slovenian districts where German was constantly spoken before the war with Prussia in 1866, the use of the Slovenian language is now almost universal. The policy of

Hungary is the exact reverse of that of Austria, as the spread of the Magyar language can only serve to consolidate the power of that kingdom. There is no Magyar race outside her territories that might serve as a magnet to attract the Magyars in Hungary to unite with them, as the German Empire attracts the Austrian Germans. But Hungary, in her union with the kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia, was compelled to guarantee the protection of Croatia, with the result that the Serbo-Croats, like the Slovenians, are bound to the use of a language entirely foreign to the science, culture, and progress of Western Europe.

Notwithstanding this, the Southern Slavs are by no means wanting in natural capacity. In the higher-class schools and universities the students of their race generally occupy an exceptionally favourable position, and in professional and official careers they are usually fairly successful. As a race, however, they are wanting in the more solid qualities of the Germans and Magyars, and educated members of their own race have often admitted to me that, though their natural quickness of intellect—a common characteristic of most of the Slavonic races—often enables them to pass examinations with seemingly brilliant success, they seldom attain the positions in after life that might have been expected from them. Among the higher-class and better-educated Slovenians and Croats, and to a yet greater extent among the Austro-Hungarian Serbs, the love of pleasure

and ambition for social distinction are the reefs upon which many a promising career is wrecked. In many sections of Austro-Hungarian society this only too often entails reckless gambling and extravagances of every kind, temptations which seem to have a peculiar fascination for nearly every branch of the Slavonic race.

As an illustration of this, I may mention that before the middle of the eighteenth century a number of Servian colonies were founded in various parts of Hungary by refugees from the Turkish dominions. Most of these settlers were engaged in trade and commerce, and at first a large proportion realised considerable fortunes, and founded churches and richly endowed charities and schools for members of their race. Of late years the number of these Servian colonies in the non-Slavonic regions of Hungary has greatly diminished, and in many cases they have almost entirely died out. This rapid disappearance of an important class is unquestionably due to the intemperance and reckless mode of living habitually indulged in by the Austro-Hungarian Serbs. As a result, there are now in many Hungarian towns splendid Orthodox Servian churches and richly endowed charities established for the benefit of Servian colonies which have almost disappeared.



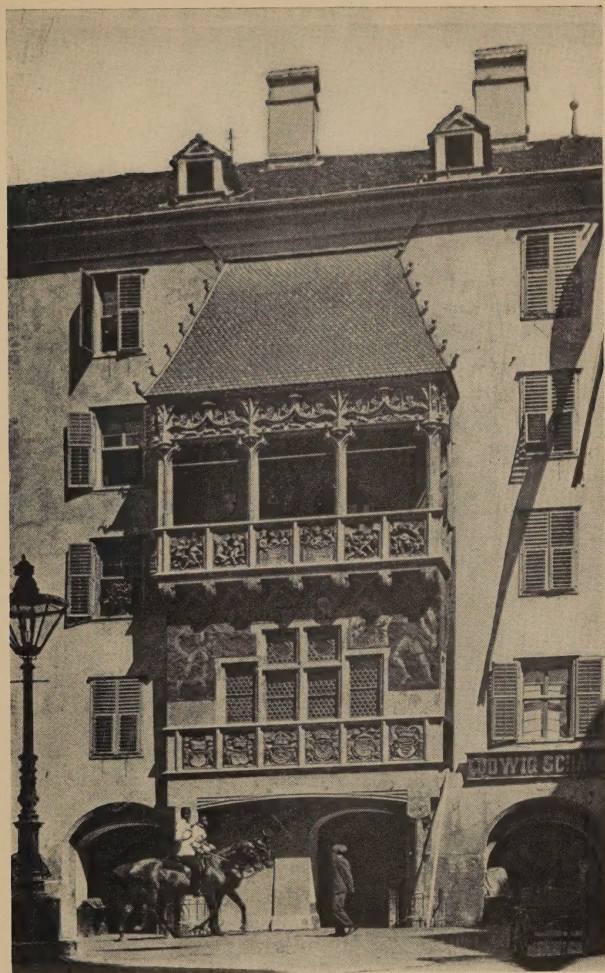
CHAPTER VII

THE MINOR NATIONALITIES

TRANSYLVANIA is often called the "Switzerland of Eastern Europe," and the analogy, if not pressed too far, is perfectly correct. Its mountain ranges are certainly imposing, though not equal to the Alpine giants of Switzerland or the Tyrol; but so far as the varied beauty of the scenery is concerned, it has nothing to lose by comparison. Like Switzerland, too, Transylvania has had a troubled past, and its history for centuries was little else than one long-continued struggle for existence. Like Switzerland, again, Transylvania is not the home of one single race, for the French, German, and Italian-speaking Swiss are here replaced by no fewer than six distinct nationalities, speaking five different languages, and professing five different forms of religious belief.

It is this curiously mixed population which has led me to choose Transylvania as the most convenient locality for a rapid glance at the representatives of the minor Austro-Hungarian races. Almost all of them extend far beyond the

boundaries of the principality, and most are to be found in larger or smaller groups in many different parts of the Empire. But here in Transylvania they are all living in close proximity, and their relations with one another in their daily life are presented in the most striking form. Though they are thus curiously mingled, each race nevertheless maintains, even in its smallest fragments, its own distinct individuality. Wallachs, of the same race as the Roumanians over the border; Székels and Magyars, who conquered Hungary in the days of Arpad; Saxons, who eight centuries ago were invited by the Hungarian sovereigns to colonise the lands that Asiatic invaders had laid desolate; the ubiquitous Gipsies, almost numerous enough to be counted as a nation; the no less ubiquitous Jews and Armenians—all are to be found in Transylvania and in the neighbouring provinces. Of these races, the Magyars and Székels form about one fourth of the population of the Principality, the Saxons about one tenth, and the Wallachs fully one half. The total number of Wallachs, especially in the south of Hungary, is, however, very considerable; they represent nearly eight per cent. of the total population of the Dual Monarchy; and it will, perhaps, convey some idea of the peculiar character of the difficulties presented in Austria-Hungary by the multiplicity of races if we bear in mind that, though the Wallachs rank only fourth in point of numbers, and after the Slavs, Germans,



A GOLDEN-ROOFED HOUSE—INNSBRUCK.

and Magyars, they nevertheless form a rather larger proportion of the total population of the Empire than the Irish do of the inhabitants of the British Islands. In the kingdom of Hungary the proportion of Wallachs is far larger, and approaches twelve per cent.

Since 1848 all races in the Dual Monarchy have enjoyed equal rights; but previous to that date the political power in Transylvania was exercised exclusively by the "Three Nations"—the Magyars, Székels, and Saxons. Each of these had its own recognised territory; but the Wallachs, who in most districts form the majority of the inhabitants, had no political rights, except in the case of isolated individuals, or very small groups, which were from time to time absorbed by the Magyar communities. Until the middle of the last century, indeed, the great majority of the race were practically in a condition of almost complete serfdom. If there is but little fraternal feeling, even among the Slavonic races, who form half the population of the Dual Monarchy, it is not surprising that the mutual antipathy of the minor nationalities, who, unlike the Slavs, differ absolutely from one another in race and creed, is even more intense. This feeling of mutual hostility and jealousy is by no means confined to purely political questions; it presents itself in almost every phase of Austro-Hungarian life, and is nowhere more strongly evinced than in the relations of the Wallachs with their Saxon and Magyar neighbours.

The Wallachs in Hungary, like their kinsmen in the independent kingdom of Roumania, claim to be descended from the Roman legions that occupied Dacia in the second and third centuries of the Christian era. Their language unquestionably supports their pretension, as fully one half is derived from a Latin source, and their physical appearance recalls that of several races in Southern Italy. Unfortunately, not a few traits in their character also resemble some of those that are the least estimable among the Southern Italians. Their claim to an illustrious origin, however, is indignantly repudiated by their Magyar and Saxon compatriots. The Saxons look upon the Wallachs very much in the same light as the South African Boers regard the Kaffirs, and, were the power still in their hands, they would probably treat them in a similar fashion. The more tolerant and easy-going Magyar merely looks down upon them with a feeling of good-natured, half-amused contempt for an inferior race. The Magyars and the Saxons are almost perpetually found in opposition to each other, but upon one point they are perfectly agreed. Both maintain that it would be high treason to all classical traditions of the heroism of the ancient Romans to believe that the Wallachs could by any possibility be descendants of Cæsar's legions.

The Magyars, at least, may be pardoned for their opinion. When, in 1848, the Austrian Government was hard-pressed in the war with Hun-

gary, the Wallach *Landsturm*, or militia, were called out by the Austrian Governor Puchner, ostensibly for the purpose of maintaining order, though they were secretly instigated to rise in insurrection against the Magyars. The horrors of that rising are equal to anything that occurred during the Indian Mutiny. The Wallachs' atrocities were by no means confined to attacks upon the families of the landowning class. Their country residences fell an easy prey into the hands of the Wallachs, but a like fate befell the Magyar villages, inhabited by peasants like themselves, whose only offence was that they belonged to the same race and religion as the landowners. Many of the most flourishing towns in the Magyar districts of Transylvania were sacked and burned, and the entire Magyar population was massacred with ferocious cruelty, women and children alike being subjected to every conceivable outrage. So complete was the destruction that a few years later the very site which many of the hapless Magyar villages had occupied was hardly discernible to the passing traveller. These Wallach allies of the Austrian army were, in fact, a savage horde, whose cowardly ferocity the Austrian commanders made no attempt to control. To take only one single instance, two thousand inhabitants of the town of Zalathna were massacred in the presence of the Austrian troops by a Wallach force. The chief magistrate of the town was shot, and his son, a child four years of age, was transfixed with a

pike, and carried about in triumph. The horrors perpetrated here, as well as in many other towns, upon women and children were simply indescribable. A little later Janku, the leader of the Wallachs who attacked Zalathna, was the honoured guest of the notorious General Haynau, and through his instrumentality received the thanks of the Austrian Government, together with a decoration. With such a record, it is hardly surprising that the Wallachs should be regarded by both Magyars and Saxons as highly undesirable neighbours; but it is typical of the Magyar character that, even by families that suffered most in their savage outbreak, the Wallach peasantry are still treated with the same indulgent kindness as those of their own race. The semi-patriarchal life still led by a large proportion of Magyar landowners, which I have already described, brings them into constant personal contact with the peasantry on their estates and in the vicinity. In moments of sickness or distress the poor Wallach peasant applies for help, as a matter of course, to the nearest Magyar landowner, and I have never known an instance in which such aid was refused on account of the nationality of the applicant.

The Austrian Wallachs, as well as the Roumanians, are unquestionably derived from a mixture of many races, and one is constantly struck by analogies recalling some of the most typical peculiarities of the Northern Slavs, mingled with traits of character and customs that remind one no less

strongly of the peasants of Southern Italy. Like the Italian, the Wallach is almost always picturesque in everything connected with his daily life. Like the Italian, again, he is both devoted to his religion and intensely superstitious. Like the Orthodox Slav, on the other hand, his devotion to his religion by no means demands a blind submission to the priest, or even that he should regard him personally with any feeling of respect. Another striking analogy with the Slavs is presented by the Wallach villages, a very large proportion of which are the poorest in the country, next to those inhabited by resident Gipsy communities. In most of them it is curious to observe how the Wallach, like the Ruthenian peasant, almost invariably constructs his dwelling of mud and wattle, when too poor to provide himself with timber, and never dreams of using stones for the walls, even when they would cost him nothing but the labour of collecting them. Unlike the Slav, the Wallach has an inveterate horror of any labour that can be avoided. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" is the principle upon which his whole life is conducted, and the greatest evil of all, in his opinion, is needless manual labour. As for the unavoidable, he has a very high ideal of the "dignity of man," and considers that it is only right and fitting that he should spend the long summer days in a delicious siesta, while his wife does all the work upon his little holding.

The Wallach peasants have always been divided into three classes, and although there is now no legal distinction between them, the highest class form a kind of patrician caste, or aristocracy, somewhat resembling the *Odnodvortsy* in Russia. They are all descended from families that were never serfs. Disdaining the designation of "Wallachs," especially since Roumania has become a kingdom, many of the more wealthy maintain that they are "Roumanian nobles," and, in fact, very many have been for generations legally "noble" in the sense in which the word was used in Hungary before 1848. The lowest class consists of the purely labouring peasantry, while those among them who have risen in the world, and acquired some wealth and position, form the class immediately below the "peasant aristocracy."

Education is, of course, more general among the "patrician" peasants; and in this class there is always the greatest anxiety to educate their sons with a view to their securing some post in the Civil Service. When such an appointment cannot be obtained, they generally take up some profession, especially that of medicine or the law. After the Revolution of 1848, the Wallachs were greatly favoured by the authorities in Vienna, on account of the assistance they had rendered to Austria in the war with Hungary. From that date until Hungary became a separate kingdom, many Magyar aspirants for posts under the Gov-

ernment found it to their advantage to adopt some ingenious change in their name that would indicate a Wallach parentage. Now, however, the Magyar influence is once more in the ascendant, and, especially in the capital, the wealthier class of Wallachs very frequently endeavour to conceal their real nationality by giving a Magyar form to their names, with a view of securing a more favourable *entrée* into Hungarian society. As a rule, however, and especially among the lower classes, the Wallachs cling to their nationality with the utmost tenacity. Intermarriages between them and members of other races are extremely rare; and so far is this feeling carried, that a Wallach girl would decidedly lose caste even were she to marry a member of her own nation if he resided at any distance from her village community. This exclusiveness accords with the peculiar superstitions, many of which are almost Oriental in their character, which they have made a part of their religion. Like a large section of the Russian *Starovery*, or Old Believers, they have a firm belief that contact with many objects, and especially the use of food that has not been prepared in accordance with certain recognised formulæ, would render them "unclean." Other races, solely from their non-observance of these customs, are, in the opinion of the Wallach peasantry, outside the pale of Christianity. The ordinary business relations of everyday life with such persons are quite permissible, but marriage

with them would be a mortal sin. Their political and ecclesiastical leaders are but little disposed to discourage this belief among the peasantry, as it fits in exactly with the policy they are pursuing. The Wallachs are increasing far more rapidly than any other race in Hungary, and so long as they can be kept from mingling with other nationalities, their political power, solely from their growing numbers, will become proportionately greater with each generation.

Nearly half the Wallachs in Austria-Hungary belong to the United Greek Church, while the remainder, like their kinsmen in Roumania, are members of the Orthodox communion. A very small number, chiefly in the south-west of Transylvania, embraced Protestantism long ago, for some unknown reason. By so doing they cut themselves off completely from the main body of their race; and they now maintain that, as Protestants, they must be regarded as Magyars, though they are totally unacquainted with the language. Curiously enough, they insist, nevertheless, that their pastors must preach to them in Magyar, though they have no objection to the prayers being recited in their own tongue. Once, I am told, a new pastor who naturally felt aggrieved that his pulpit eloquence should fall upon deaf ears, introduced an unheard-of innovation. He began to preach to them in Wallachian. No sooner had he commenced, however, than his indignant hearers rose in a body and left the

church. The insult was an unpardonable one. They claimed to be Magyars, and their sermons must be in Magyar, whether they understood it or not. What business had their pastor to preach to them in their own language, and thus proclaim to the world that they were only Wallachs after all?

Notwithstanding a few exceptional cases of this kind, however, the "Magyarisation" of the Wallachs is extremely rare, and only members of the more wealthy and educated classes abandon their nationality for private reasons. Some years ago I made the acquaintance of a young Hungarian doctor, who has since become a celebrity in his special branch of the medical profession. Though his name was distinctly Magyar, he was really of Wallachian race, a fact that he admitted to me as a foreigner, but kept carefully concealed from the somewhat exclusive Magyar circle at Pesth, to which, as it happened, all his most influential patients at that time belonged. He was, nevertheless, a fervent "Roumanian" at heart, and urged me to pay a visit to his cousin in Transylvania before definitely accepting the opinion of his people generally entertained by other races in Hungary. His relative was a peasant of the patrician, or *Frumtasi*, class, and resided in a part of the country which enabled me also to see a good deal of the Saxon, Magyar, and Gipsy communities, which were all within easy access. My visit was an extremely interesting one, as it gave

me a striking insight into the relations of these different races and the life they lead. My host, though a peasant, was a man of means, having inherited a comparatively large fortune from his mother, a native of Roumania. He was well educated, had travelled in Germany and France in his student days, and had spent some weeks in London. Like his cousin the doctor, he was an ardent politician, and devoted to the cause of his race. His grand ideal was the creation of a "Greater Roumania," which should embrace all those countries in which the Wallachs—or "Roumanians," as he preferred to call them—form the majority of the inhabitants. In support of this claim he showed me school maps published in Roumania, in which Bessarabia, Bukowina, Transylvania, and the whole of Hungary east of the Theiss are claimed as forming part of the future kingdom of Dacia.

In visiting some of the Wallach villages in his company, I could not help remarking that if he, and all the other Wallach politicians, would only employ their energies in endeavouring to bring about an improvement in the condition of the people, and above all in their education, they would benefit them far more than by all their dreams of future greatness. "It is evident," he replied, "that you have based your opinion upon what you have been told by our Magyar rulers. Naturally *they* are anxious to see our people educated, as education in their hands would lead in-

evitably to Magyarisation, and we, who have kept our nationality distinct for nearly two thousand years, should become absorbed in the ' Hungarian people.' No, sir, never shall such a fate be ours! The Roumanian race has still a great and glorious future before it. It is a field that for eighteen hundred years has lain fallow, and it is better it should remain so for the present, for during all those centuries it has only been accumulating its energies. Ah, some day the cruel wrongs we have suffered will be avenged, and the whole world will know what the Roumanians really are! The Italians look back with pride to their Roman ancestors, but what are they compared to us? They are, at best, only descendants of the Roman people at large, half of whom were in slavery. For two hundred years the best, the noblest, the bravest that the whole Roman Empire could produce were drafted into the Roman legions from which our race has sprung. We are not only descended from the ancient Romans,—the conquerors of the world,—but exclusively from those among them who were specially selected for their armies as the noblest and bravest of all. For eighteen centuries hardly ever has a Roumanian married an alien, and our race is as pure to-day as it was in the time of our Roman forefathers. Never shall the Magyars rob us of our language, our national customs, and our religion, or train our children to forget their illustrious origin."

Absurd as all this sounds in sober English, the influence of such men upon the ignorant Wallach peasants is a factor of considerable importance in the development of Austria-Hungary. They, and political agitators from Bucharest, are steadily preparing the ground for a national movement that will certainly play no small part in the complicated questions that will have to be solved by the Dual Monarchy when the Emperor Francis Joseph no longer holds the reins of government.

But, setting politics aside, it must be admitted that Wallach villages are unquestionably picturesque. The life of the people is that of the Middle Ages. As a race, they are possessed of considerable intelligence, as is proved by the educational results obtained by the relatively small proportion of Wallachs who receive any serious education at all. Like the Southern Italians, however, their natural tastes are far more æsthetic than practical. Among the peasantry, in their wood or mud-built huts, the scanty furniture is rudely made and of the most primitive construction, but almost always painted, and very frequently with remarkably artistic effect. While the Wallach peasant generally contents himself with a mere opening in the roof of his cabin in place of a chimney, a roughly made hand-loom is almost invariably to be found, with which his wife is occupied in all her spare moments in weaving fabrics of wonderful fineness and exquisite colours. These are destined for the national cos-

tume, and vary in almost every locality. Generally they are striped, or woven in some Oriental design, into which gold or silver thread is frequently introduced. To look at many of the designs used in Wallach embroidery, it seems difficult to believe that they are not the production of an art student, carefully trained in the science of form and harmony of colour, rather than that of an ignorant peasant who has simply followed her own instincts and fancy as the work progressed.

But if the Wallachs' artistic taste reminds us of their ancient Italian origin, the sacred *icons*, which we should invariably find hanging on the walls of cottages in the place of honour, are a no less striking evidence of their relationship to the Slavonic races. The most highly prized of the *icons* found in these Wallach dwellings are those made by Russian *Koustar*¹ peasants. All over the Slavonic world, particularly among the peasantry, a specially sacred character is believed to be attached to those which are made in the curious *Koustar* communities of Russian peasants, who for generations have devoted their whole lives to the production of these "Holy Pictures." They are supposed to possess exceptionally miraculous powers of warding off misfortune, due, I was told, to the fact that the *Koustar* peasants make it a point of conscience to produce these *icons* by hand-work

¹ *Russian Life in Town and Country*, p. 290.

alone, and without the aid of any mechanical appliances — machinery, in their belief, being the invention of the Evil One. Enormous quantities of these sacred pictures are imported from Russia every year for the use of the Wallachs, Ruthenians, and other members of the Orthodox Church.

As might be supposed, the Wallach costume is one of the most artistic and graceful to be found among the many races of Austria-Hungary. It varies greatly in different localities, but in its general features it is everywhere the same. The women wear a long, flowing, white linen garment, fastened round the waist by a girdle, to which are attached two aprons — one before and one behind — and these, as in the costume of the Southern Slavs, form a kind of skirt. A loose jacket, open in front, is also very generally worn, but the form, colour, and ornamentation of both jacket and apron-skirt vary so much that a general description would be impossible. The head-dress is usually a small shawl of fine and semi-transparent fabric, often richly embroidered; in some villages it is bound round the head like a turban, in others it is a veil half concealing the face; but whatever the fashion adopted, it always seems to add to the peculiar classic beauty of the Wallach women. The ordinary working costume of the men in summer is a blouse, or shirt, and tightly fitting trousers, both of home-made linen, fastened round the waist by a broad black or red leather belt. Rarely indeed do the Wallachs of

either sex purchase any article of clothing. Everything is the product of their own land and the women's labour, while the beautiful dyes they employ are all made from flowers or plants gathered in the forests or among the mountains, and produced by processes which they are reluctant to reveal.

The Transylvanian Saxon may best be described as the absolute antithesis of the Wallachs. No contrast could be greater. Precise, orderly, hard-working, money-loving, almost entirely devoid of any poetic element in their nature, the hard-headed Saxons of this corner of Eastern Europe seem also to be as far removed from the enthusiastic, poetic, music-loving Magyars as they are from the Wallach peasantry whom they both despise. The Saxon land occupies the south-eastern corner of the principality, and, as already mentioned, these Teutonic colonists were planted there as a living breakwater against the ever-threatening flood of Turkish invasion. The Saxons are not beloved by either their Wallach or Magyar neighbours; but it must be admitted that the life they led for centuries could only have been endured by men of iron nerve and obstinate resolution. Human beings, however, are not always improved by a life of duress, and in the case of the Transylvanian Saxons it is the least amiable traits of character that have been most developed. In this Saxon land, surrounded by Wallachs, whom they despised as creatures of an inferior

race, and for centuries in imminent danger of destruction from their Asiatic foes, it is not surprising, perhaps, that they should have learned to look upon every stranger, even men of their own race, as a possible enemy against whom they must be upon their guard. In fact, these Transylvanian Saxons had so hard a lesson to learn in their troubled past, that its teaching has become ingrained in their very nature. They have become fossilised, and cannot make themselves realise that they are now living in another world. For many ages they held the foremost place in the country, so far as intelligence and education are concerned, and it needs but a glance at a Saxon village to understand that the very high opinion that they had of themselves, as compared with the Wallachs, or even the Magyars of other days, was by no means unjustified.

A Saxon village presents a strikingly typical appearance, and forcibly reminds us of the life led by these wardens of the frontier when the Turks were still a terror to the Christians of Eastern Europe. The principal edifice is the church, and this is often a regularly fortified building surrounded by solid stone walls, and generally placed in the best strategic position that could be found in the locality. Hither the population fled at once for refuge the moment an alarm was given that Turkish raiders were in the vicinity. The church was consequently always provisioned for a siege by contributions from each farm, and no-

thing, perhaps, could better show how deeply rooted national customs are in Austria-Hungary than the fact that, to this day, the storehouses in a large number of Saxon churches are still as carefully provisioned by the villagers as they were in by-gone times. The houses are large and solidly built, with stone walls of considerable thickness. The general arrangement of the rooms resembles that adopted by the prosperous German peasants in Austria as well as in the Fatherland; but the farmyard is nearly always surrounded by a high stone wall, which gives the homestead an air of almost monastic seclusion. The furniture is as solid as the house, and frequently of great value, for the Saxons have always been men of substantial means, and the accumulated wealth of many generations in the form of antique furniture, bronzes, and old silver and pewter vessels would represent no inconsiderable sum. The Saxon families were never large, rarely averaging more than two children, and consequently the ever-accumulating fortunes were seldom diminished by subdivision. During the last century, indeed, the Saxons have been steadily decreasing in numbers, and in not a few localities "Saxon" villages are to be found now inhabited exclusively by Wallachs. The original families have died out, but their houses, solid as the hills, still remain, and are occupied by members of a race that would never have dreamed of constructing such dwellings for themselves, and who, indeed, until recent

times, were not even allowed to settle in the vicinity of Saxon villages.

The Saxons' houses, as in the case of the Magyars on the Alföld, are built on each side of the road, which is often of immense width. Each house, with its walled-in yard, occupies a considerable space, and the village is therefore frequently a mile or more in length. This, however, is the aristocratic quarter, in which are the ancestral residences of all the peasant grandees of the community. The smaller dwellings of less important personages occupy the side roads, while in the outskirts the proletariat element is now generally represented by a perfectly distinct quarter inhabited by Wallachs, from which the Saxons ostentatiously keep aloof. The gulf that separates Mayfair and Whitechapel is not wider than that between the Saxon and Wallach quarters of even a country village. Often, too, another nationality is represented. Of late years a large number of Gipsies have been compelled by the authorities to abandon their wandering habits and settle down. They, again, form a caste apart, and, to the poorest of the Wallachs, the degradation of living in the midst of a community of Gipsies would be as unbearable as it would be to the proud and wealthy Saxon, were he forced to make his abode in the Wallach quarter. A characteristic instance of the rigid lines by which nationalities are separated in Austria-Hungary is presented by the relations between the Saxons

and the *Ländler*. The latter are as completely German as the Saxons, but are descended from Austrians who, in the reign of the Empress Maria Theresa, were induced to settle upon lands left unoccupied by the diminishing numbers of the Saxons. In every instance the two communities, dwelling side by side, though identical in nationality, language, and position, and educated in the same schools, have remained absolutely distinct for a century and a half. Marriages between them are extremely rare, and though many of these *Ländler* are now Protestants, and attend the same church as the Saxons, each occupies a different portion of the building, so that, even in their prayers, the distinctive individuality of each may be maintained.

Notwithstanding their isolated position in this far-away corner of the Austro-Hungarian dominions, the Saxons never lost touch with the Fatherland, and though, of course, Roman Catholics on their arrival in Transylvania in the twelfth or thirteenth century, they eagerly embraced Lutheranism at an early period of the Reformation. This long maintained connection with Germany has been fostered by the Saxons' devotion to education. In the days before railways, a journey from Transylvania to a German university must have been no light undertaking; yet it was faced with dogged resolution by vast numbers of Saxon peasant students. In fact, a regular system of transport was organised,

generally by Wallachs, for a party of a dozen students to be conveyed in waggons the entire distance. This arrangement somewhat resembled "Cook's Tours," as the conductor provided the students with all they needed on their journey, and would bring back with him another party of those who had completed their academic course. An old Saxon pastor, who had travelled thus to Heidelberg, expressed his conviction to me that the knowledge acquired of men and manners by this system of travelling, which assuredly gave ample time for observation and reflection on the road, was, in his opinion, by no means the least valuable part of the education of the Saxon students in his younger days.

Notwithstanding this thirst for knowledge, however, the Saxons still remain among the most conservative of the Austro-Hungarian peoples. Their system of farming, for example, is as primitive as that of centuries ago, and, indirectly, this is now leading to a not inconsiderable increase in yet another nationality. For many years past large numbers of Bulgarians have been in the habit of coming to Transylvania and the south of Hungary, Slavonia, and Croatia, where they hire land from the Saxons, or the often equally unprogressive Croats, which they cultivate with no little skill and profit to themselves. From the diminishing numbers of the Saxons in many localities, much of their land is lying idle, and many Bulgarian visitors to Transylvania now re-

main as permanent settlers, instead of returning to their own country as soon as the harvest is over. All over the southern portion of the Hungarian half of the Dual Monarchy the Bulgarian peasant is now frequently to be seen, with his unmistakable physiognomy, his dark complexion, shaven head, and features that recall a Mongolian rather than a Slavonic origin.

The Székels, whose home lies in the south-east corner of Transylvania, between the Carpathians and the Saxon land, deserve more than a passing notice. Like the Saxons, they formed part of the bulwark against invasion from the East, and for centuries life for them was one continual struggle for existence. The Székels are almost identical in race and language with the Magyars, but they are believed to have settled in this district long before the main body of the Magyars entered Hungary. Like the Saxons, they enjoyed special privileges in return for the services they rendered to the State as wardens of this dangerous frontier; but it is typical of the two peoples that, while both claimed absolute equality among all the members of their respective races, the Saxons secured it by prohibiting the creation of any class of nobles among their people, while the Székels obtained the same result through their whole nation being "ennobled" *en masse* by the Imperial Government. Technically speaking, the Saxons have never been "peasants." They have always been "burghers," whether residing in

their towns or villages; and from the earliest period until now they have remained an essentially prosperous "middle-class" race, with all the more characteristic features of the bourgeoisie. Only a relatively very small proportion have sunk to the condition of the labouring classes, that section of society being generally represented among them by the Wallachs. Though all are "noble," however, the Székels are comparatively poor, and large numbers are forced to seek employment as labourers on the Saxon lands, or to emigrate over the border to obtain work during harvest in Roumania.

There are yet three more of the minor races to be mentioned—the Jews, Gipsies, and Armenians. The Jews in Austria-Hungary, as everywhere else, are so distinctly an urban race that I must refer to them in a later chapter. It is one of the most curious features of Austro-Hungarian life that there is not one of the many races that make up the inhabitants of the Dual Monarchy that is not regarded with hatred, or fear, or aversion, or contempt by all the others. The universal feeling towards the Jews is unquestionably one both of hatred and fear. The Gipsy is neither feared nor hated, but looked down upon by all the other races with contempt. The general feeling towards the Armenians lies midway between the two. According to an often-quoted Hungarian legend, while the Jews and Gipsies were first being created, some of the two kinds of clay became

accidentally mixed, and from this mixture were formed the Armenians. Most of those in Austria-Hungary are descended from refugees who fled from the persecution they underwent in Moldavia in the seventeenth century. They received permission to settle in various localities, among others in Transylvania, and founded colonies with certain special privileges. Some of these colonies still survive, but, notwithstanding, the Armenians are assuredly destined to be absorbed ere long in the various races among which they happen to reside. In Austria-Hungary, as elsewhere, the Armenian evinces a capacity for financial and commercial affairs second only to that of the Jew. There are, indeed, a few localities in which the Jews, baffled and disgusted, have abandoned the field to their Armenian rivals. The Gipsy is, perhaps, the only race that is not regarded with aversion by all the others. The Gipsy is too far down in the social scale to be feared. The most opprobrious epithets in a dozen languages are showered down upon his head; but they are borne with meekness, for every Gipsy knows that, though he may steal the peasants' chickens, rob the landowners' forests, or now and again make off with a tradesman's horse, there is always a lurking feeling of fondness for him in the heart of every Austrian and Hungarian. That is especially the case in the Magyar half of the Empire. Hungarian life without the Gipsy would lose one of its most piquant charms. For

Hungarians of every rank of life, from great magnates to the poorest peasants, in the capital, in provincial towns, in wayside hamlets, the Gipsy plays a part that closely touches two important elements in the national character—the universal love of music and, above all, among the lower orders, the prevalence of superstition. I have already described the village Czardas, at which the Gipsy is the presiding genius. We shall meet with him again when treating of life in towns, for throughout Hungary, and to a certain extent in many parts of Austria also, from the palaces of the Imperial family to the peasants' cottages, the well-known Hungarian proverb, "No entertainment without the Gipsy," is almost universally true.

But now, in concluding this sketch of the minor races, let me give the reader an idea of the appearance of a Transylvanian village, in which we shall find assembled, but not mingled, members of most of the more important races I have described. All along the broad white road, skirting the vine-covered hills, stand the Saxon peasants' solidly built houses, most of them with well-grown, heavily laden fruit trees within the high stone wall enclosure. It is the vintage season, and there is an air of unwonted animation in every quarter of the village. Even the stolid faces of the Saxons are lit up with something approaching an expression of gaiety, and some may even so far forget their dignity as to break into catches of song. Teams of huge white oxen are slowly

wending their way along the road, led by Wallach peasants, whose white linen costume glistens in the sunlight, except where here and there it is deeply stained with the juice of the grape. In the ox-waggon are huge casks of wine, and upon them are other Wallach peasants, gay with ribbons and wreaths of vine-leaves upon their hats, or slung over their shoulders. Some are playing upon the *tilinka*, a kind of flageolet, while others are singing bacchanalian songs that may perchance date back to the distant times of their Roman ancestors. Turning aside into one of the vineyards, we should find a crowd of graceful Wallach women gathering grapes, or bearing heavy overflowing baskets to the huge casks upon the waggons waiting in the road. The pressing of the grapes is still done in the primitive fashion that has existed for thousands of years. A white-robed Wallach, his linen trousers rolled up high above his knees, is trampling the grapes, beating time with his feet to the rhythmic measure of an air that a Gipsy band is playing. Looking over the Saxon village from the hillside, we see the Wallach settlement, the low huts, built of timber or with walls of mud and wattle, all standing in picturesque disorder beside the ill-kept, deeply rutted by-road that leads to their quarter of the village. Farther off still, and at a respectful distance from both, the solid, grim, stone-built mansions of the patrician Saxons and the flower-bedecked cottages of the Wallachs, are what look

at first like brown mounds of earth. On nearer approach we should find that they were Gipsy dwellings, generally half excavated in the ground, so that little except the brown thatched roof rises above the surface.

The Gipsy is, before all things else, a lover of nature. When forced to settle down, he is content if his dwelling be, after all, but a burrow in the earth, with a rudely thached roof above his head, instead of the canvas of a tent; but almost invariably the most picturesque spot that can be found, that neither the Saxon nor the Wallach would have thought of selecting, will be his choice. The shade of leafy trees, soft moss-grown banks, waving ferns, and a profusion of wild flowers will always prove an irresistible attraction to the Gipsy when fate, in the form of the police authorities, compels him to settle down. Luckily for him, in most parts of Transylvania such spots as these are rarely difficult to find. It is, perhaps, for this reason that in the principality of Transylvania alone nearly a hundred thousand Gipsies have found a home. Here, as everywhere else, all the efforts of the Government to induce the Czigans to settle down as permanent residents in any locality are far from successful. The Empress Maria Theresa took a deep and kindly interest in this strange race, and during her reign serious efforts were made to reform them. While vagrancy was severely punished, land and comfortable cottages, erected at the expense of the

Government, were placed at the disposal of all who chose to establish themselves as peasant farmers. To eradicate the hereditary passion for wandering, marriages between members of the Czigan race were strictly prohibited, and a small dowry was promised to every Gipsy girl who married into some other nationality. This last proposal was the only one that produced any practical result, but one that was widely different from what the kind-hearted Empress intended. The Government had forgotten that the Czigans will never admit that marriage is anything more than a temporary partnership, that may be dissolved at any moment, and the fair Gipsy maiden who had accepted a Wallach, a Slovak, or a Ruthenian peasant as her husband considered that she had then fulfilled her part of the contract, and would therefore be free, a few days later, to rejoin her wandering tribe, with as much of the dowry as she could manage to secure.

The number of "resident" Gipsies is now apparently far larger than formerly, but this is due mainly to the Gipsy quarters near the towns and villages having become a kind of permanent encampment, in which wandering bands can take refuge for a time whenever the vagrancy laws are strictly enforced against them. The trades taken up by those who are thus forced for a while to give up their normal existence are those of brick-makers, whitewashers, basket-makers, and especially smiths, the trade of a farrier being, next to

that of a musician, the one in which the Czigans most excel. But perhaps the most lucrative trade of all is that of the fortune-teller and vender of charms and strange remedies endowed with magic virtues for the cure of all the maladies that man or beast is heir to. Among the Wallachian, Magyar, and Slavonic peasantry the suppression of the Czigian charm-seller would be looked upon as an irreparable misfortune. The Wallach, indeed, regards the black magic of the Gipsy as far more potent in case of real need than all the supernatural power claimed by the priesthood of his church. Poor as the Gipsy looks, he is often, nevertheless, possessed of far greater wealth than might be supposed. This generally consists of silver tankards and jewellery, often extremely ancient, which under no stress of poverty can he be induced to sell. Treasures of this kind are handed down as heirlooms, and are often the common property of the whole tribe.

But evening approaches, and the labour of the day is over. From one or two of the Saxon dwellings we can hear the sound of music, loud, strident, and brazen, and the tramp of many feet. But far away, in the Wallachs' quarter, there is dancing also, only they, unlike the Saxons, have chosen for their merry-making an open space beneath the trees, instead of a stuffy room indoors. All are dressed in their best costumes, the women in their long white robes and brilliantly coloured apron-skirts, with open jackets richly embroid-

ered and glittering with imitation gold and silver thread. Long ribbons attached to their thick plaited hair hang down their backs, and in their kerchief head-dress are placed bunches of peacocks' feathers. The men have donned their sleeveless embroidered waistcoats, over their white linen costume, and their broad gala belts, inlaid with brilliantly polished brass, glint in the rays of the setting sun. The village Czigans' fiddles begin to play, and slowly, with an almost serpentine movement, the dance begins. The Wallachs have many faults, but their worst enemies cannot accuse them of a want of gracefulness in all they do, and in this village dance these simple peasants would have but little to learn from professional dancers. Every few minutes the measure of the music changes, and ever and anon the men, and then the women, break out into wild catches of song, to the same air, perhaps, which Dacian men and maidens sang in the days when Roman legions garrisoned their land.

The last rays of sunset fade away; the full moon rises, and in the moonlight the white ghost-like figures of the Wallachs glide in and out of the shadows of the trees, while the strains of Czigan music float dreamily through the still night air.





CHAPTER VIII

LIFE IN AUSTRIAN PROVINCIAL TOWNS

IT is almost impossible to generalise in any description of Austro-Hungarian life and the difficulty of the task is greatly increased when, turning our attention from the various races as a whole, we attempt to describe the life led by the different sections of society. For once again we are confronted by the inevitable question of nationality. A description of a section or class of one race would often be quite misleading if applied to a corresponding class in another nationality. As a rule, however, it will be found that in external matters, especially in the manners and customs of all classes, the more distinctive national differences become less and less aggressively marked as we ascend in the social grade. Among the peasantry the racial peculiarities present themselves in their crudest form, and are so evident as to strike the most casual observer. In the generally somewhat more educated artisan class in towns these differences, though still distinctly marked, are often decidedly modified, and they are still more so in a higher social grade,

among the commercial and middle classes generally. Among members of the higher classes met with in society in Vienna or Pesth, or in the more important provincial towns, the passing visitor might be pardoned if he imagined that here at last he had reached a stratum of society in which racial differences had entirely disappeared. Yet he would generally be mistaken. Education and culture, and the more or less cosmopolitan mode of life led by the higher classes all over the world tend, of course, to soften and conceal the differences of nationality which the peasant reveals at every moment in his language and customs, his mode of life, and even in his religion and superstitions. But in spite of this tendency to cosmopolitanism among the higher classes, the spirit of nationality burns almost as strongly in the heart of the Austrian, the Polish, or the Magyar noble as it does in the breast of the poorest peasant.

In this survey of Austro-Hungarian life I purposely introduced the reader first to the peasant class, not only as the most numerous section of the people, but also because in it the fundamental differences between the various races, and the rigid lines which divide them, are revealed in their most evident form, and unconcealed by the conventionalities of a higher section of society. In Austro-Hungarian towns the differences of nationality are hardly less important than they are in the rural districts. In most of them the

population is as curiously mixed as we have found it to be in the country regions, while there is an almost complete absence of the subtle, indefinable influence which, in town life elsewhere, speedily effaces the individuality of the new-comer. In towns, as in the country, Germans and Czechs, Magyars, Wallachs, and Saxons live for generations in the same locality, often their whole lives through under the same roof, yet, notwithstanding, retain unchanged to the end their language, their religion, their national aspirations, and modes of thought.

But the aspect of Austro-Hungarian towns is no less striking and typical than their inhabitants. An Eastern proverb asserts that "Every man bears written upon his countenance the history of the life that he has led." In a somewhat similar way we might read much of Austria-Hungary's past in the streets of her provincial towns and capitals. Just as Nature herself seems to have formed this strangely varied land of plain and mountain as a fitting scene for the dramatic history of the ceaseless struggle of a dozen different races with one another, so nearly every town and city has an aspect that seems exactly to accord with the part that it has played in the national drama. Take Innsbruck, for example; with its vast natural fortress, the Alpine giants whose heads seem almost spectral in the snowy mists that so often enshroud them. Could any spot be imagined more exactly suitable for the central

scene of the heroic exploits of Hofer and his brave Tyrolese patriot army? We need but to glance at the streets in the older portions of the city, with their picturesque arcades and painted frescoes, to realise that here the Teutonic and Italian elements had met. A second glance at the people would show that, as but rarely happens in Austria, two races have not only met but blended, for even in the Northern Tyrolese not a little of the liveliness of the Italian is mingled with the solidity of the Southern German. Such a union of the two races seems natural enough, for Innsbruck lies just half-way between Rome, whence the Italian element once dominated the civilised world, and Berlin, which not a few Pan-Germanic Chauvinists believe is destined to take her place as arbiter of the destinies of Continental Europe. Innsbruck has long been closely associated with many of the most dramatic events in Austrian history; and it is curious, in view of the loyal devotion of the Tyrolese to the House of Hapsburg, that their land passed into the possession of its Austrian sovereigns, not by succession or conquest, as in the case of most other provinces, but by the extremely undramatic and prosaic form of purchase, when, in the fourteenth century, it was sold to Rudolph IV., Duke of Austria, by the last representative of its preceding rulers. From the days when Duke Frederic trusted his life with absolute confidence to the Tyrolese peasants, though a price had been put upon his head by his

enemies, till the time of the late Emperor Ferdinand, who sought refuge at Innsbruck during the Revolution of 1848, the Northern Tyrolese have almost constantly remained among the most devoted subjects of the House of Austria.

For the present Emperor Francis Joseph, and many members of his family, the Tyrol has always been as favourite a residence in the season as the Highlands of Scotland were with our late Queen. Among the other royal residents in the vicinity of Innsbruck was the sister of the late Empress Elizabeth, the ill-fated Duchess d'Alençon, who some years ago so nobly sacrificed her life in the disastrous fire at the *Bazar de charité* in Paris rather than leave her place when the warning of danger was given to her, lest her doing so should create a panic. That panic came in spite of her heroic self-sacrifice, and the poor of Innsbruck have never ceased to deplore the tragic death of the amiable Princess, whose kindly sympathy and help was never refused to the sorrows and sufferings of others.

While Innsbruck is mainly a summer resort for tourists, Gratz, the far more important capital of Styria, presents us with a widely different phase of Austrian life. Society at Gratz is essentially aristocratic, somewhat exclusive, but ever ready to throw open its doors with true Austrian hospitality to all visitors whose position and character entitle them to recognition. The residence of a number of wealthy and influential nobles, Gratz

has also become the favourite resort of retired officers and officials. A few years ago no fewer than fifty-four generals of the Austrian army were settled here with their families, besides many hundreds of officers of lower rank. Spread out on both sides of the river Mur, Gratz is unquestionably one of the most beautiful of the provincial capitals. The most charming view of the city and its environs is from the Schlossberg, which is situated almost in the centre of the town, and rises to a height of about four hundred feet above it. From this spot the whole of the city can be seen and, with the mountains by which it is surrounded, it presents a scene of romantic beauty that the visitor will not speedily forget. But Gratz is not only a beautifully situated city. It is now one of the most important intellectual centres in the Empire.

In the sixteenth century Styria, like Bohemia, became strongly imbued with the spirit of the Reformation. At the close of the century the provincial authorities, in spite of the prohibition of the sovereign, erected in Gratz a Protestant church and a college, to which some of the most eminent professors were invited. Among these was the celebrated Kepler, who was placed at the head of the astronomical section. On the accession of Ferdinand II. as Archduke of Styria, Kepler was expelled as a heretic, all the Protestant schools and churches in Styria were closed, and the pastors and professors were ordered to

quit the country within fourteen days, while all the books in the Protestant libraries, twelve thousand volumes, were burned at the foot of the Schlossberg, and a Jesuit college was erected on the spot. From that time until the end of the eighteenth century, the intellectual condition of Styria remained absolutely stationary.

The rapid progress that has been made in Gratz since that date has been mainly due to the enlightened policy of the Emperor Joseph II. and the patriotic and intelligent efforts of the Arch-duke John. There was a touch of grim humour in the decision of the reforming Emperor, after the expulsion of the Jesuits in the eighteenth century, that the State lunatic asylum should be erected upon the spot where, in their vain effort to put back the clock of human progress, they had destroyed the library that Kepler and his fellow-professors had collected. Besides the University, Gratz now also possesses one of the most important technical colleges in the Empire, and many other valuable educational establishments. The origin of many of these was the Johanneum, an institution founded by the Arch-duke John in 1812. Here practical instruction was given gratuitously by eminent professors upon almost every branch of art, science, or manufacture that bears in any way upon the wonderful natural resources of the Duchy, one of the most richly endowed in mineral wealth and agricultural fertility in Austria. To the Johan-

neum is attached a magnificent natural history museum, which is regarded as one of the most complete in Europe.

Prague presents another phase of Austrian urban life that is, in many respects, in striking contrast with the aristocratic capital of Styria. If we knew nothing of the many vicissitudes that Bohemia has passed through, it would need but a glance at this picturesque old city, with its imposing natural surroundings, to feel instinctively that many a drama in European history must have been enacted here. No more fitting spot could well be imagined for the central scene in Bohemia's dramatic history than the curious basin-shaped valley in which its capital is placed, the rocky heights by which it is surrounded, and the imposing mass of the Hradschin, the palace of the old Bohemian kings, frowning disdainfully upon the city below. But all the elements that caused strife in the past are still existing. The Czech and the German who fought at the fateful battle of the White Hill, each for the supremacy of his own race in Bohemia, are represented by their descendants to-day, still unreconciled and unmingled. Both Czechish and German are still spoken by the people of Prague, and, in spite of all the efforts made in the past to crush out their nationality, about three fifths of the population still cling to the old Bohemian language, and their proportion to the Germans increases year by year. But the Germanic race was not the only

one dwelling amongst them with whom the inhabitants of Prague were in constant conflict in by-gone ages. In the old town, on the banks of the Moldau, still stands the Jews' quarter, as it has done from time immemorial. According to their own traditions, they are the oldest Jewish colony in Europe, and settled here as slave-dealers before the destruction of Jerusalem. In Prague, the Jews are no more beloved than they generally are in Slavonic countries, and the history of their quarter would be one of almost unceasing conflict. Surrounded by walls, it formed a city within the city, with a special charter of its own, and almost complete self-government. It contains no less than nine synagogues. The oldest, a vast, gloomy building, was erected in the twelfth century, and near it is the Jewish cemetery, now disused, as it is crammed with the graves that have accumulated there during at least eight centuries. In this old cemetery the ancient tombstones are unhewn boulders, with inscriptions in Hebrew, placed in exactly the same positions as I have seen in many a modern Jewish burial-place in remote rural districts in Western Russia.

But the Jewish quarter of Prague is no longer inhabited exclusively by Jews. Its narrow streets and sunless slums are now the home of many thousands of the poorest of the Czechs, while the houses of the wealthier Jews are to be found in the most fashionable quarters of the capital. Prague

is one of the most important manufacturing cities in the Dual Monarchy, and, as in most parts of Austria, its trade is largely controlled and mainly financed by Jews or Germans. The "sweating" system, so terribly prevalent in most Austrian manufacturing centres, is carried on here by Jewish contractors and middle-men with crushing effect upon the poorer classes, and, little by little, the Jewish "Ghetto" of Prague is becoming a Christian "Ghetto," thronged by the poorest of the poor, but nevertheless producing for the Jewish landlords an aggregate rental that exceeds what would be obtainable for an equal area in a fashionable quarter of the city. As in Russia, so here in Bohemia, and most of all in Prague, where the aspirations of the Czechs are most articulate, the traditional feud between the Slavonic and both the Germanic and Jewish races is intense and growing. This feeling is evinced in almost every phase of the national life, and often, it is true, seriously affects the well-being of the Czechs themselves. For example, in 1902 a severe outbreak of typhoid in Prague was proved to be due to the impure drinking water and defective drainage in an important quarter of the city. Several schemes were at once prepared for obtaining a supply of pure water and reorganising the drainage system, but only one of these was found to be really effective and practicable. It was afterwards discovered, however, that the engineers and contractors who had proposed this

scheme, and whose tender was about to be accepted, were being financed by a German firm. The indignant protests of the Czech majority of the population, when this fact became known, compelled the local authorities to break off their negotiations with the German capitalists, and as no purely Czech firm of contractors made an offer that could be accepted, the whole quarter of the city has ever since remained in its dangerously unsanitary condition.

Notwithstanding the many impediments to their advancement that are created by their somewhat exaggerated ideas of patriotism, the progress of the Czechs has been considerable during the last few years, and with the increased facilities for better education, the general condition of at least a large section of the working classes has unquestionably improved. Especially significant is the great increase in the number of youths and working men who regularly attend the trade and manufacturing schools, in which practical instruction is given, especially to apprentices and journeymen, in the technicalities of their various callings. Most of these schools are supported by trade corporations, of which both masters and employees are generally members.

In striking contrast with the capital of the old Bohemian kingdom is that of ancient Poland, which is also comprised within the Austrian dominions, though it is now only the chief town of Western Galicia. The present condition of Cra-

cow is perhaps the best proof of the complete incapacity of the Poles for self-government. Neither in Russian Poland nor in the portion under Prussian rule do the Poles enjoy anything approaching the degree of liberty which they possess in Austria. Until 1846 Cracow still remained the capital of all that was left of independent Poland, a small self-governing republic under the protection of Austria. The mad attempt of the Polish nobles in Galicia to revolt in 1846 gave the death-blow to the last vestige of independence possessed by the Polish races, and Cracow, which was the centre of intrigues as dangerous to Russia and Prussia as to Austria, had to pay the inevitable penalty of absorption by the latter. The province of Galicia is now unquestionably loyal to the House of Hapsburg, but, nevertheless, little indeed of the improvement of late years, small as it is, in the condition of the Polish people generally, is due to the efforts of the nobility or higher classes of their own race. Among Austrian statesmen some of the most capable and patriotic are, it is true, Polish nobles; but most of them belong to the highest rank of society, which, by constant intermarriage with other races, can now hardly be regarded as Polish, except in name. Among the smaller Polish nobles and landed proprietors, who are of almost unmixed race, but few do anything of a practical character for the intellectual or material improvement of the great mass of the people.

There is something tragic in the fate of this ancient city of Cracow when one thinks of the vast kingdom of which it was once the capital. The royal palace, now used as barracks, erected by Casimir the Great in the fourteenth century, still stands upon the Wavel, the rocky hill at whose base Krakus, the mythical Polish hero, slew a dragon which guarded its hidden treasures in a cave. The cathedral adjoining is the Polish Westminster Abbey, in which are sleeping generations of Poland's kings and heroes, from the Jagellons to Kosciuszko. In the treasury of the cathedral, and in its many shrines, is almost untold wealth of gold and jewels, the accumulated gifts and pious offerings of many generations of Polish nobles. In the city, that lies below the palace and the cathedral, are still standing thirty-six of the fourscore churches that it once contained, and other buildings which indicate what it was in the days of its grandeur when its population was a hundred thousand instead of the twenty-five thousand it amounted to when it was absorbed in the Austrian dominions. Since that date the number of its inhabitants has nearly trebled; its ancient university has been remodelled, and a number of educational institutions have been founded.

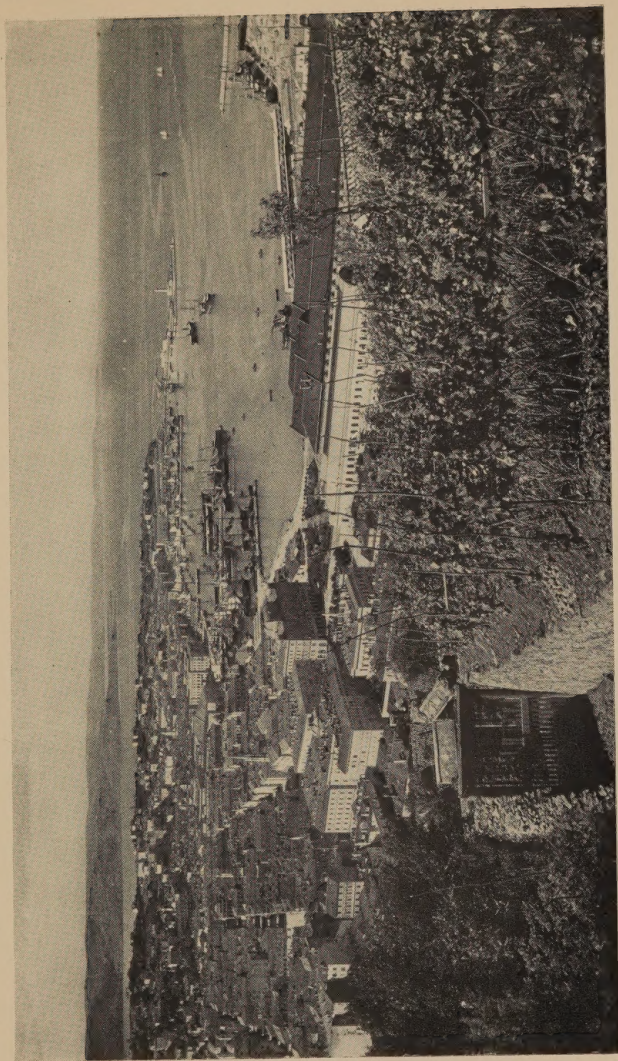
In Cracow the inevitable problem of the diversity of race presents itself again; and here the hostile nationalities are Poles and Jews—the latter forming about one third of the population.

In Lemberg, the capital of Galicia, they amount to nearly one half, and in Brody to more than three fourths. The trade of Cracow, as of Galicia generally, is steadily increasing; but it is almost exclusively in Jewish hands, and in Cracow itself, where the body of St. Stanislas, the patron saint of the Poles, lies in a silver sarcophagus, surrounded by costly gifts bestowed upon his shrine by Polish pilgrims from all parts of the world, the bulk of the Poles themselves are still hewers of wood and drawers of water for the alien race which their nobles, in days of yore, made the only intermediaries between the people and themselves. Perhaps one of the most striking monuments in the world, created by a fallen race to commemorate their past greatness, is the Kosciuszkoberg in the vicinity of Cracow, a mound of earth, three hundred feet in height, raised by the Senate and nobles of the city in the last years of its independence, and formed in part of earth brought with immense labour and expense from all the great battle-fields in which the Poles had fought in their long and troubled history. In the construction of this mound Polish nobles and statesmen, and members of the Senate, toiled side by side with the paid Polish workmen. A few years later the curtain fell, the drama of Polish history was over, and the last vestige of her independence was wiped out.

Turning from Cracow, in the extreme north of the Empire, to the southern provinces, we find,

in the cities upon the Adriatic coast, examples of many important phases of Austro-Hungarian life. Here, as in the wide belt that forms the northern portion of Austria, the population is mainly Slavonic, but belongs to the Southern or Serbian group, while the racial conflicts, inseparable from Austro-Hungarian affairs, are complicated by the influence of Italian-speaking people, especially in the towns, and the strenuous efforts made by the Germanic Austrians to maintain the supremacy they enjoyed until recent times. A complete description of this portion of Austria would need a volume in itself, for we must not forget how large a part of the world's history has been affected by the rivalries and conflicts of the states and cities upon the Adriatic coast from Venice to Albania. I will take only two towns as examples: Trieste, which we may regard as typical of modern Austrian life in the south of the Empire, and Ragusa, in which we are reminded at every step that the Austria of our own day is built upon the ruins of fallen states that once played no small part in European history, but whose spirit still survives, and is a living force, in the aspirations of the minor nationalities.

In Trieste, the Hamburg of South Germany, as the Pan-Germanic Austrians term it, we find all the characteristics of a flourishing modern seaport. Here almost every nationality is represented; but while the Italians form the majority, there is, among the middle and especially the



VIEW OF TRIESTE FROM THE NORTH.

commercial classes, a considerable proportion of Germanic Austrians. The feud between the two races is as incessant as that between the Germans and the Czechs, for the Pan-Germanic party has always maintained that the German Empire is the "Heir Apparent" to this outlet on the Adriatic. An incident that occurred as recently as April, 1903, will give an idea of the relations existing between these rival races. The Pan-Germanic students at Innsbruck have for some time been carrying on an organised attack upon the professors of Italian nationality in their university by completely interrupting their lectures. To emphasise their "national" aspirations, their interruptions took the significant form of singing the *Wacht am Rhein*, while the loyal Austrian hymn, *Gott erhalte unsern Kaiser*, was carefully avoided. This anti-Italian movement in the Tyrol led immediately to a counter-demonstration at Trieste, where, during the performances of *Ernani*, the whole audience, night after night, rose *en masse* and sang over and over again the chorus, *Siam' tutti una sola famiglia*. Trieste, indeed, has always been devoted to the cause of the Irredentist Italians; but here, too, are the headquarters of many other political movements, warmly supported by members of the numerous foreign colonies that have settled in this cosmopolitan seaport town—Serbs, Albanians, Greeks, Roumanians, Bulgarians, Montenegrins, and Turks—who not only form innumerable coteries

in society, but whose plots and counterplots and ceaseless intrigues against one another it would be impossible to describe in detail.

If bustling, active, growing Trieste is typical of one phase of the Austro-Hungarian life of the present day, Ragusa recalls the memories of long past centuries. Trieste and Ragusa were both founded by Roman colonists, but while the former was only an inconsiderable seaport in the Middle Ages, Ragusa was not only one of the most important commercial cities on the Adriatic coast, but from the position she attained in the world of literature, justly claimed the title of "The Athens of Illyria."

Austria-Hungary, I have said, is built mainly upon the ruins of fallen states. The little republic of Cracow, as we have seen, was absorbed by Austria after the Polish revolt of 1846. Ragusa was seized by Napoleon in 1806, and two years later the ancient Republic had ceased to exist, and the city itself, by the Treaty of Vienna, was subsequently converted into an Austrian provincial town. After all the sufferings she had endured in her long history, and the services she had rendered to the neighbouring states during the fifteen centuries of her existence, the republic of Ragusa deserved a better fate. The beautiful old city is still surrounded by massive walls and frowning towers and bastions, just as it was when it lavished its hospitality upon Richard Cœur-de-Lion, and as we pass up its narrow picturesque

streets, we can imagine what it was in the days of its grandeur, when its palaces were the homes of its merchant princes and the city itself the safe asylum of all the refugees from neighbouring states who fled to her for protection. It was the special glory of Ragusa that, for centuries, she would never give up a fugitive; and again and again the city was besieged in the vain hope that the Senate might be coerced into abandoning this right of asylum, which the Ragusans cherished as one of the most precious of their privileges. In those stormy days the wheel of fortune was constantly turning, and many a time it happened that those who had vainly demanded the giving up of a fugitive were glad themselves to take refuge within the hospitable city. When the widowed Queen and son of Bogoslave, King of Dalmatia, for example, were expelled from their country, Ragusa at once offered them an asylum, although the city, not long before, had been besieged by Bogoslave himself for refusing to give up another royal fugitive. In yet another direction, mediæval Ragusa was far in advance of her time. In 1416, the Republic was the first state on the continent to forbid all participation in the slave trade, under pain of fine and imprisonment. The preamble of the law might have been written by Wilberforce or Lincoln. It declares that it is "base, wicked, and abominable, contrary to all humanity, and a disgrace to our citizens, that the human form, made in the image of our Creator,

should be regarded as merchandise, and sold as if it were a brute."

The humanitarian ideal that inspired this reform at such an early period is a special characteristic of the poems of many of the greatest Ragusan writers of the time, and is also evinced, I may add, by the establishment of the first foundling hospital in Europe and an immense number of other charities of an eminently practical kind. But while Ragusa was thus setting an example of humanitarianism that was then new to the world, her trade was rapidly developing, and extended not only all over the Mediterranean, but subsequently even to our own shores, where, early in the sixteenth century, a large number of Ragusan merchants were established. As a result of the terrible earthquake of 1667, followed by the attacks of her hostile neighbours, the wealth and power of Ragusa have now, it is true, passed away for ever, but the influence she exercised upon her less civilised Slavonic neighbours has had far more permanent results. Italian in their origin, the Ragusans became at length really Slavonic, through their unavoidable admixture with the races around them. Italian, however, remained the official language, and many of the most eminent professors of the Italian universities were invited to settle in the city; but the culture and learning they brought with them served also in no small degree to develop the native literature of the Southern Slavs, which then had its

chief home in the Republic. This branch of Slavonic literature, embracing not only translations of all the best works of Italian writers, but original poetic and dramatic productions of great merit in South Slavonic, though almost unknown in Western Europe, has had an immense influence upon the Southern Slavs. The poems of Gondola, for example, and of many other mediæval writers, have played so great a part in developing and sustaining the feeling of national patriotism among the Serbs, that, as they affirm, though the material greatness of Ragusa is now no more, the spirit of her philanthropic *cittadini* and liberal-minded *patrizj*, or nobles, is still living in the Slavonic poems of those olden times, which, constantly recited or sung by the peasantry of Serbian and kindred races, is the leaven that is slowly, but surely, working for the regeneration of their people.

As might readily be supposed, there are many fundamental differences in the social life of provincial capitals that vary so widely from one another as the aristocratic and intellectual city of Gratz; Prague, with its growing industries, its wealthy financial and commercial classes and its bitter race-feud; Cracow, with its Polish aristocracy, self-hypnotised by their day-dreams of a vanished past, while sullenly submitting to the inevitable Trieste, with its world-wide commerce and political intrigues; and Ragusa, reduced to less than a fifth of its population in the Middle

Ages, but resting in its nest upon the Adriatic, in serene repose, as though it knew that the principles of human justice and mercy, for which it sacrificed so much of its blood and treasure in days gone by, are now the recognised ideal of the civilised world.

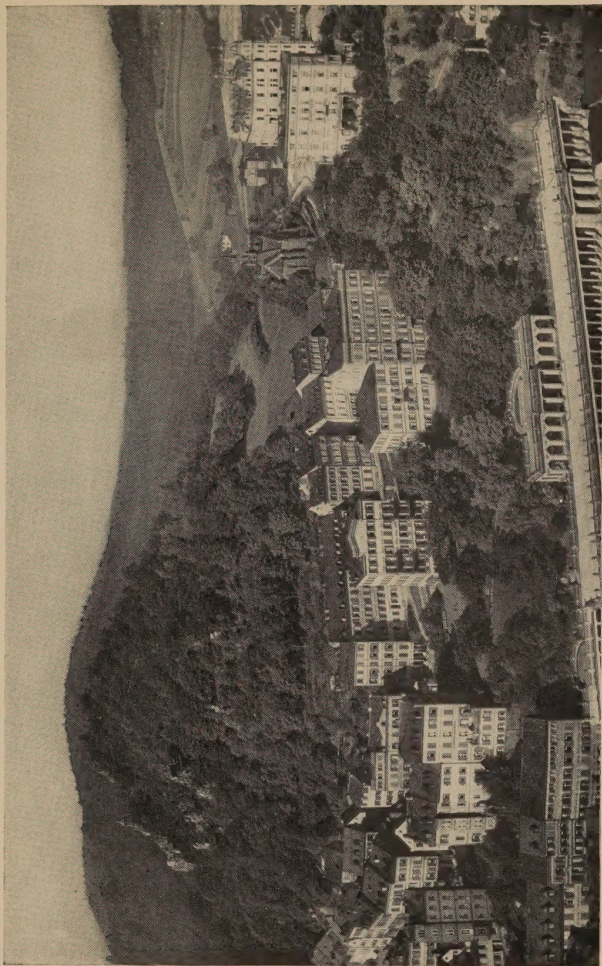
In the less important towns the differences are even more marked, for in Austria, as everywhere, the nearly imperceptible lines dividing many sections of society are always far more rigidly observed in small provincial towns than they are in capitals. Casual visitors to Austria, who speak of the freedom with which all classes mingle together, are often quite misled by appearances. At certain times and in certain places, Austrians of every class will, it is true, be found mingled in a way that might seem to indicate an almost startling disregard of social and caste distinctions. It is, in fact, mainly because such distinctions are universally recognised among them that in many public entertainments, or in the cafés, in parks and public gardens, all classes of society can take their pleasures together without the least danger of disagreeable results. Both Austrians and Hungarians, with all their light-heartedness, have a natural dignity and pride of their own which renders anything like vulgar insolence extremely rare.

In the social and domestic life of the German Austrians there is an almost complete absence of the stiff rigidity that is so striking a feature

among the Prussians. In this respect they more nearly resemble the Bavarians, to whom as a race they are closely allied; and this resemblance is greatest in nearly every point in which Bavarians differ most from their Prussian kinsmen. The family life of the middle classes is far more natural and unrestrained, and the relations of husband and wife are distinctly those of equality. Women in the middle and lower classes in Austria play quite as important a part in the management of the family fortunes as they do in Russia. The Austrian may often not be a model husband, but among all above the rank of working people there would be something that would shock his sense of chivalry were he to regard his wife and women-folk as in any sense his inferiors. Among the lower classes, and especially the smaller tradespeople, the easy-going Austrian is quite willing that his generally more energetic wife should not only bear her part in the labour that their business entails, but do no small share of the thinking and planning as well. As a rule, among all classes, Austrian wives share their husbands' pleasure to a far greater extent than among their North German kinsfolk; and it not infrequently follows that Austrian ladies of position and unimpeachable character are to be seen in fashionable resorts that would be regarded as decidedly questionable in North Germany. The ideal of womanhood in German Austria is by no means that of the *Hausfrau* alone. Among the higher classes

of society a large number of women are as much devoted to sport—riding, shooting, and fencing—as men, and even in the middle classes in provincial towns there is much of the same kind of comradeship between men and women. As a result, Austrian society, even in the provinces, is far more lively than in Germany, and certainly has a greater tendency to become somewhat “fast”; but, notwithstanding this, the idea of Austrian social life that generally exists in England is decidedly exaggerated. The prevalence of card-playing and gambling is perhaps the greatest evil, as it is one that often brings a score of others in its train. At the same time, Austria-Hungary is not the only country in Europe in which betting and gambling have been responsible for the ruin of no small number of noble families.

I will mention only one other town as typical of Austrian urban life. “I always feel at home at Carlsbad,” said an Austrian politician to me one day; “it represents so exactly the political condition of Austria-Hungary.” The grim humour of the remark lay in the fact that Carlsbad is built upon the crust that covers what is supposed to be a vast subterranean lake of boiling water. Only by watching all the springs with ceaseless vigilance, and relieving the pressure by prompt action when it becomes too great, is it possible to preserve the town from dire destruction. But threatened lives live long, and Carlsbad, though, like the Austrian Empire itself,



CARLSBAD FROM CAMERA OBSCURA.

perpetually menaced by a seemingly imminent danger, still holds its own in the struggle with the complicated and mysterious forces which it is compelled in turn to humour or to coerce. About a century ago it seemed upon the brink of ruin. The restless conflicting forces of fire and water in the depths below had been neglected for some years, and in their efforts to find relief nearly blew up the whole town. But that peril is, presumably, averted now. The most dangerous portions are firmly battened down under solid masonry, held together with iron and steel, while the risk of this Metternichian policy of inexorable repression is modified by the modern idea of providing safety-valves, through which rise the springs which attract to Carlsbad the wealth and fashion not only of Austria-Hungary, but of all Europe and the United States as well.

It is curious to note that the discovery of the virtues of the Carlsbad waters was indirectly the result of the terribly accurate marksmanship of the British archers at Crécy. The Emperor Charles IV., we are told, long continued to suffer from the wounds he had received in the memorable battle, and was induced by his physician, Peter Bauer, to try the efficacy of the springs which now bear his name. Their curative properties had been discovered a short time before, through one of the Emperor's hounds, which had been wounded by a stag at bay, falling into the Sprudel, the hottest spring of all. The hound

emerged a few minutes later, half boiled, it is true, like many a modern visitor to Carlsbad, but perfectly cured. So runs the legend, but, however discovered, the waters of Carlsbad have for centuries attracted visitors to this favourite Bohemian watering-place. At every step we are reminded at Carlsbad of the variety of races that make up the Austro-Hungarian people. Germanic Austrians, Magyars, Czechs, and Moravians, many of the more wealthy Wallachs, Serbs, and Croats, and half-Italian Austrians from the Southern Tyrol or the maritime district of the Adriatic, are constantly to be met with here; nor is there less variety in the different ranks of society that frequent the springs. Even the ubiquitous Jew is not wanting; great financiers from Vienna or Pesth, and their less influential, but more picturesque, *confrères* from Galicia, unmistakable in their long, shiny gabardines, as well as from Prague and all parts of Bohemia and Austria. Carlsbad, however, is essentially aristocratic, and so the lower class of Jews have to take the waters in the early morning, an hour or two before the regular opening for the fashionable visitors.

Carlsbad is not supposed to be a pleasure resort. The object of all the visitors is, at least ostensibly, the restoration of health that has broken down under the stress of society functions, or of political life, overwork or study, or the cares and worries inseparable from the existence of great

financiers. The day opens about six in the morning with the strains of a hymn played by one of the many excellent Austrian bands that are stationed here, and soon after crowds of visitors are to be seen wending their way to the springs, of which the Sprudel is the most important. Over the spring a large glass pavilion has been erected with seats all round, and here the patients are served with glasses of the hot mineral waters, which are handed round by waitresses with the cleanest of white caps and aprons. By eight o'clock the wells are generally almost deserted, and the time from then until about midday is spent as much as possible in the open air. All around Carlsbad are many beautiful promenades, and for those who cannot take the prescribed pedestrian exercise there are innumerable donkeys to be hired. But real patients, of course, hardly form half the annual visitors to Carlsbad. Many are accompanied by their families, and though all boisterous excitement is tabooed by the medical authorities, who are here supreme, a vast amount of mild flirtation is carried on. Shopping, too, occupies no little time, and on every side are to be seen specimens of the rapidly growing Czechish arts and manufactures—shops a mass of exquisite Bohemian glass, others with more or less precious stones and minerals from the Bohemian mountains, cut and set in an endless variety of artistic forms; while all the day through, the strains of a band are floating in the

air, playing at one or other of the numerous hotels and cafés. Life in Carlsbad is necessarily cosmopolitan, as, of its forty thousand annual visitors in the season, fully one half are foreigners, and the large number of English and Americans who frequent the Austrian and Bohemian health resorts every year have introduced many essentially British customs, sports, and pastimes among the Austrians. Lawn-tennis, for example, has of late become one of the most popular amusements, and afternoon tea is now by no means unusual among the upper classes.





CHAPTER IX

TOWN LIFE IN HUNGARY

TOWN life in Hungary differs widely in many respects from that led in the Austrian half of the Dual Monarchy. After centuries of struggle for national freedom, Hungary is only just emerging from economic and social conditions recalling those of the Middle Ages. Like Austria, she has, as we have seen, a complicated problem to solve in the presence of many mutually antagonistic nationalities within her borders; but apart from this, the peculiar characteristics of Hungarian town life reveal, even more strikingly than is the case in Austria, the traces of her long and troubled history. In the Magyar towns of the Alföld, in those founded by the Saxon garrison in Transylvania, and in those in the South, peopled mainly by Southern Slavs, Hungary had to choose between final submission to the Turks or absorption into the dominions of Germanic Austria. Either alternative would have entailed her ruin. The condition of the Christian lands that fell into the hands of the Turks was disastrous enough. The fate promised by Austria, in those dark days

of religious fanaticism, was not much better. In her relations with Hungary the main object of Austria was the complete subjugation of the sister kingdom, and this intention was expressed with cynical frankness in an Austrian State paper in the seventeenth century: "Hungary must be made Catholic, German, and poor."¹

Happily for Hungary this policy did not succeed so completely in her case as it did in that of Bohemia. An important proportion of the Magyars clung tenaciously to Protestantism. The Germanic varnish that was partially applied is now being rapidly wiped off, leaving the bulk of the race more intensely Magyar than ever before; but unquestionably the policy of "making Hungary poor" succeeded only too well. The normal development of urban life under such conditions was absolutely impossible, and though Hungary at last, thanks to the wise policy of the Emperor Francis Joseph, is now rapidly progressing, most of her towns still possess a peculiar character of their own, unlike anything to be found elsewhere in Europe.

The Alföld towns are exceedingly curious. The first impression they convey to the visitor is that by some potent magic fifty or sixty Magyar villages, such as I have already described, have been transported bodily to one place, and set down in close proximity. A story, of course ex-

¹ "*Oportet facere Hungariam Catholicam, Germanam, et miseram.*"

aggerated, is often told of an Austrian who had accepted an invitation from a Hungarian friend to visit him in one of these "Cities of the Plain." In the evening of the day when he hoped to arrive, he discovered that he had gone several miles beyond his destination, and learned to his amazement that he had been driving that morning for several hours through the heart of a large city without being aware of it. The enormous area of these village cities is due to the burghers being the common proprietors of a large extent of territory by which they are surrounded on all sides. The city of Debreczin, for example, possesses property covering about three hundred and fifty square English miles, with a total population of about fifty thousand; and Szegedin, with about seventy-three thousand inhabitants, has nearly the same, while several other towns, with a smaller population, possess, nevertheless, an even larger territory. The land that lies between these giant villages, some of which, like Debreczin, have the rank of "Royal Free Cities," is almost entirely unoccupied, except by the immense farms of private landowners. The portion of the town territories nearest to their frontier consists generally of a wide zone of pasture-land, often arid and seemingly of but little value. A little nearer to the city, and completely surrounding it, is a wide ring of well-cultivated peasant farms, which, in their turn, surround another zone of pasture-land, in the centre of which is placed the "city,"

properly so called. Until quite recently, the population of most of these cities consisted almost entirely of peasant burghers, nearly all of Magyar race, whose mode of life differs but little from that of the Hungarian peasantry in the smaller villages which I have already described. Notwithstanding, all of them claim the title of "civis," and take no little pride in the fact that they are burghers of "cities" which, so far as area is concerned, are unquestionably among the largest in the world.

In these Hungarian "Cities of the Plain" there are but few buildings of any architectural or antiquarian interest. No sooner were the Turks finally expelled than the lands they had desolated were reoccupied, and in grouping themselves in these huge village-towns, the newcomers gave but little thought to architectural beauty. As a rule, the streets are wide roads, often with thatched cottages consisting of a ground floor only, or at most with one floor above. Even in the largest Alföld cities it is only in the most frequented thoroughfares that any attempt is made at paving the streets. Several of them are, notwithstanding, of considerable and growing commercial importance, and little by little, even here, the Old-World characteristics which they represent are gradually disappearing, and doubtless in a few years the ordinary conventional features of modern towns will replace what has, hitherto, been an almost unique condition of ur-

ban life in Europe. This will be the less difficult, as in most of these towns there are rarely any buildings—except perhaps the town hall, the churches, and a few other public edifices—which possess a very permanent character.

Still, these Alföld towns are necessarily the centres in which the families of the Hungarian landowners, residing in the district, are compelled to purchase all the ordinary requirements of daily life which they do not have sent to them from Pesth or Vienna. A large and growing proportion of the trade here, as elsewhere in Austria-Hungary, is in Jewish hands, and the display in the shops is not altogether tempting. For the greater part of the year, social life is certainly far from exciting. The cities of the Alföld, unlike so many provincial towns in Austria, and in some other parts of Hungary and Transylvania, are not the town residences of any important landed proprietors. Such society as there is consists almost exclusively of the commercial classes and a small number of officials, while very frequently the wealthiest residents are Jews, all intercourse with whom the higher class of Magyars avoid as much as possible. In most of the Alföld towns, however, there is at least one social “season” in the year on the occasion of the important fairs for which this part of Hungary is celebrated. The largest are the four held every year at Debreczin, the most village-like of all the great Alföld Royal Free Cities, and while they last the whole aspect

of the place is metamorphosed. Debreczin is not only an important commercial centre, despite its rural appearance, but it is also the headquarters of Hungarian Protestantism. Nearly all the inhabitants are Calvinists, as, indeed, are the great majority of the Magyar Protestants, and their church, which can accommodate a congregation of over two thousand, is the largest Protestant church in the kingdom. The College of Debreczin, which is also maintained exclusively by the Calvinists, is one of the most important in the country, and, with the different schools attached to it, gives instruction to more than two thousand students in theology, law, and science. In Debreczin, the leaders of society belong mainly to the families of the clergy and the professors of the College, and social life has consequently acquired a very exceptional tone, which is in striking contrast to that of the Magyars generally, and somewhat recalls the descriptions of Puritan life led in England in by-gone days. Notwithstanding the passion of the Hungarians of all races for music and the drama, the Debreczin municipality long refused permission for a theatre to be opened in their city, and when at length a reluctant consent was given, such rigid restrictions were imposed that, for many years, the utmost difficulty was experienced in giving any performances at all.

But four times a year, and especially at Michaelmas, it seems as though an enchanter's wand had transformed the city of the grave and learned De-

brecziners into one of the gayest in the kingdom. The streets are thronged with merchants, visitors, and merry-makers, though the fair itself is held outside the town. Formerly, only a favoured few of the dealers who thronged to Debreczin were permitted to live within the city; itinerant showmen, mountebanks, conjurers, and especially Jews and Gipsies, not being allowed to leave the precincts of the fair. This is still held on a wide plain outside the town, and is almost a city in itself. Long lines of booths and tents form streets of temporary shops, in which articles and goods of nearly every imaginable description are temptingly displayed.

The idea of the poet that "The East is East, and the West is West, and never the twain shall meet," certainly does not apply to these Alföld fairs. Hungary lies so near the border-line of Asiatic and European civilisation, that here the products of the peoples of both are to be seen mingled in picturesque confusion. The scene is one that will not speedily be forgotten, and in some respects is even more striking than the great Russian fair at Nijni Novgorod, on account of the great variety of the Austrian and Hungarian costumes in addition to those worn by the large crowd of dealers from all parts of the Eastern world. The fair is thronged with Servians, Bulgarians, Armenians, Turks, Greeks, and every variety of Jew, with all the wares they have brought, many of curious kinds, for which a sale

would hardly be sought in any part of Western Europe. Nor are the stalls of the Austrian and Hungarian dealers by any means the least interesting. The visitor who should be tempted to make a collection of national costumes would here find an *embarras de richesse*. Every article of men's and women's attire, with all the complicated variations demanded by the costume of each particular race in different districts, is here obtainable, from the Magyar women's red top-boots to the gorgeous pearl and silver bedecked head-gear of the Southern Slavs. The fairs in these Alföld cities correspond in some degree to the sales in London and Paris shops at the end of the season, and are as eagerly looked forward to by the wives and daughters of the *Táblabirák*, or country squires, who reside upon their estates. The itinerant merchants, who still play an important part in supplying the needs of remote country districts in Russia, are far less numerous in Austria and Hungary. The regular shops in the provincial towns are rarely well supplied, but at the fairs almost every imaginable article of household utility or personal adornment can be obtained. On another part of the wide plain outside Debreczin, a second fair is held at the same time, for the sale of farm-stock, horses, and agricultural produce, and no small part of the proceeds is quickly expended in the purchase of some of the tempting bargains brought to the adjoining general fair by the shrewd dealers, who have learned,

by long experience, that money, in the rarely filled purses of the rural Hungarians, is as apt to burn their pockets as it is in the case of the proverbial schoolboy. For the whole period of the fair the social life of the Alföld can be seen at its best. There are no great magnates residing in this portion of Hungary, but for the families of the *Táblabírák*, a brief visit to town at fair-time corresponds in some respects to the Highland gatherings at Inverness. Balls and parties are the order of the day, and families and friends, who in Hungary are so often detained upon their estates by the daily avocations I have already described in a previous chapter, are sure of meeting at least once a year.

The general conditions of life are nearly the same in all the Alföld cities, apart from the special character possessed by Debreczin as the great centre of Hungarian Calvinism. In nearly all we should find the same *rus in urbe*; the vast agglomeration of peasant residents; the slow development of manufactures; and, as usual in nearly all peasant communities, opposition to any form of progress that would entail an immediate expenditure. Until 1848, the revenues derived by the cities from the vast amount of land they hold outside their limits was usually more than sufficient to cover all the demands of Imperial taxation. Now, however, the case is widely different, as the taxes have immensely increased, and the peasant burghers view with extreme suspicion

any proposed improvement that might augment their municipal burdens. This short-sighted policy was the main cause of the terrible disaster that befell Szegedin, one of the most important of the Alföld towns in 1879. It was known that this low-lying city on the banks of the Theiss had been, for several years in imminent danger from the autumn and spring floods that regularly occur in this capricious river. The necessary precautions were neglected until at length the greater part of the town was wiped out, with a loss of over two thousand lives, by a sudden inundation. The destruction of Szegedin was one of the most appalling disasters of recent years; but the town is now reaping the benefit of its dearly bought experience. Little by little its prosperity is returning, and it is becoming one of the most progressive of the Hungarian "Cities of the Plain."

The towns in Transylvania present a striking contrast to those of the plain-loving Magyars. Some of the more picturesque among them—for example, Klausenburg, Hermannstadt, and Kronstadt¹—are now by no means unknown to the tourist; but it would need more than a passing visit to realise how deeply almost every phase of life in these Transylvanian towns has been affected by the varied nationality of their inhabitants. The towns, like the country districts, are peopled mainly by the three principal races I

¹ In Magyar known as "Kolozsvar" (pronounced Kolojvar), "Nagy Szeben," and "Brassó."

have already described—the Saxons, Magyars, and Wallachs—and each has brought its own peculiar character, its prejudices and religion, to which it clings as tenaciously as the peasants themselves. Nothing, perhaps, could show the force of atavism more clearly than the striking difference between the Germanic Austrians and the Saxons of Transylvania. Notwithstanding their common Teutonic origin, each retains unchanged the special peculiarities that it received from its far-distant ancestors. In the Austrian are reproduced nearly all the more striking traits of character of the South Germans generally. The so-called “Saxon” of Transylvania is not less a reproduction of the hard-headed, bargain-driving, money-loving Flemings and Germans of the Lower Rhine, who settled there in the twelfth century. Nearly all the towns were founded by these Saxon colonists, and still retain their distinctive national character, although in most of them the bulk of the inhabitants are Wallachs, who form the majority of the lower classes.

One of the most typical of these old towns is Hermannstadt, or Nagy Szeben. Its houses might all have been built by the same architects who designed some of the oldest streets in Nuremberg, but here with a peculiar character of their own, due to the incessant dangers the town was compelled to face in former times from the perpetual raids of the Tartars and Turks. The streets are still as silent, and the people as grave,

as in the days when, at every moment, they expected to hear the alarm-bell ring out the warning that the foe was at their gates. In Hermannstadt many old houses still exist with subterranean passages under the streets, communicating with the fortifications. The official residence of the *Sachsengraf*, the "Count of the Saxons," who, elected by the people themselves, was the supreme ruler of the "Saxon nation," Hermannstadt has always been pre-eminently *the* Saxon town of Transylvania. The office and title of the *Sachsengraf* still exist, but the functions are now purely nominal, and the position is usually united with that of the sheriff. The social life of Hermannstadt is in striking contrast to that of Kolozsvár, the capital of the "Magyar nation" in Transylvania. In spite of their celebrated Saxon college, and the reputation for learning that they have enjoyed for centuries, the people of Hermannstadt have never succeeded in throwing off the rigid Old-World customs and modes of thought that give such a peculiar character to their village life. Social amusements of any kind are decidedly discountenanced as frivolous. The Magyars, however, affirm that this disinclination for festivities or pleasure is mainly due to the expense they entail; needless or avoidable expenditure of money being an unpardonable sin in the eyes of the Transylvanian Saxons. However that may be, even Germanic Austrians and Magyars are

perfectly agreed as to the inhospitable character of the Saxon people. For my own part, with a few notable exceptions, I have seen nothing in my own experience of them to contradict this unfavourable opinion.

Kolozsvar is the town residence of most of the Magyar nobility. Though Transylvania is now completely absorbed in the kingdom of Hungary, the "Magyar Capital" still retains much of its former position as an influential social centre. The Magyar aristocracy of Transylvania were so long shut up within the borders of their own principality, that, for generations, they intermarried almost exclusively among themselves, and as a result the relationships are as complicated as among our own Highland families in Scotland. It seems as if everybody is related, more or less nearly, to everybody else, and it is perhaps partly due to this that Transylvanian society has a special charm of its own. There is such a complete absence of stiffness and formality, that even a foreigner finds it difficult to realise that he is not one of themselves. This is especially the case with Englishmen, for among no Continental people are the English more popular than among the Magyars. The gayest season at Kolozsvar is that of the carnival, when dancing is often kept up until eight or nine in the morning. Even Lent is by no means rigorously observed as a period of fasting, for even those among the Transylvanian Magyars who are Roman Catholics

have never been remarkable for their scrupulous adherence to the rites of their Church. Indeed, fifty or sixty years ago the Austrian Government issued an edict sternly forbidding all dancing during Lent. The result was the exact opposite of what the clerical government of the day desired. Thenceforward it became a matter of patriotism to give a whole series of balls until Easter, and the gayest of all on Ash-Wednesday, as a protest against Austrian interference in private matters. At this season, all over Hungary, and sometimes in Austria as well, the last dance is frequently taken in broad daylight. The lamps and candles are extinguished, the shutters are thrown open, the curtains are drawn aside, and as the Gipsy music rings out into the wild measure of a gallop, faster and more passionate than ever, the scene in the bright morning sunlight is certainly a strange one, and, at least from the English point of view, causes a decided revulsion of feeling. The physical exhaustion of the dancers, the faded, drooping flowers, and the general disorder resulting from many hours of revelry, are all revealed with cruel distinctness by daylight, and the disagreeable impression is rather increased than diminished by the lugubrious strain of the melody, like the wailing of spirits in agony, with which the Gipsy band always terminates the night of revelry.

Kolozsvár may be described as a capital in miniature. Everything here is necessarily upon

a small scale, for the Transylvanian nobility, who have never been wealthy, have suffered severely, like all the other landowners, from the depression in value of agricultural produce. Fortunately, however, from a social point of view, the possession of mere wealth alone is not essential in either Austrian or Hungarian society. The large town residences of many Transylvanian nobles are now arranged as "flats," in which the impoverished owners are compelled to content themselves with a single suite of apartments. But want of money does not seem to have much effect in damping the natural gaiety of the Magyar character. The theatre here is celebrated throughout Hungary, as in it a considerable number of the best known Hungarian actors and actresses have been trained, and every effort is made to keep up its reputation. The Hungarians, like the Austrians, unquestionably possess a natural talent for the drama, and private theatricals are a very favourite form of amusement in society. Nowhere, however, are they more popular than here, where every one feels the deepest interest in the celebrated theatre. Kolozsvar is peculiar in being one of the very few localities in which a large proportion of the Saxons have become completely merged and lost in the Magyar population. This is due to a considerable number having embraced Unitarianism—a form of religion which is firmly rooted in several districts in Transylvania, and especially among the Székels.

The prevalence of Unitarianism in Kolozsvar has given the town a very undesirable reputation. Gretna Green has been celebrated all over the world as a spot in which the marriage bond could be tied with the utmost possible celerity. Kolozsvar, on the contrary, has been no less celebrated all over Hungary as the most favourable locality for dissolving the union of those who, having "married in haste," had no desire "to repent at leisure." Several of the many races in Hungary, and the Saxons among them, enjoyed a special guarantee from the Government, protecting their laws, customs, and religion. On the question of marriage this led to a very curious complication, for while the Roman Catholic Church refuses to recognise the validity of a divorce, it is admitted by many Protestant sects. From the privileged position of the Lutherans and the Unitarians in Hungary, therefore, the possibility of divorce depended upon the religion of the persons demanding relief. Roughly stated, the view taken by Hungarian law was that a marriage between Catholics could not be revoked, as at the time when the parties entered into the marriage contract each regarded it as irrevocable. Among Protestants, Unitarians, and Jews, however, the contract entered into was of a different nature, as the parties to it understood that the failure of one of them to fulfil its conditions would justify the other in demanding its dissolution. The accommodating character of the authorities

at Kolozsvar afforded special facilities to such applicants in their appeal for sympathy and relief. It was only necessary to purchase a house in the town, and thus become a "citizen," when the marriage knot could be untied almost as rapidly as, in former times, the yoke could be put on at Gretna Green. When necessary, conversion to Lutheranism or to Unitarianism could be arranged without delay, and thus all legal obstacles avoided. The purchase of a house was a mere formality, as several unoccupied houses were kept specially for this purpose, and, having been "bought" for a nominal sum, were "sold" again as soon as the divorce was procured.

It is a feature of Austro-Hungarian development that most of the universities and great intellectual centres—except those in the capitals—are situated in the outlying portions of the Empire; in the Austrian dominions, for example, in Gratz, Innsbruck, Prague, Lemberg, Cracow, and Czernowitz, and in Hungary at Agram and Kolozsvar. Besides these, there are many other towns which, though not the seats of universities, are possessed of gymnasia, "real" schools, and colleges supported by the provincial governments or by religious bodies. Both Austria and Hungary, in fact, now fully realise that intellectual culture is one of the strongest links in the chain that binds the Empire together, and that its importance is greatest in the districts near the frontiers, where foreign influence is necessarily most

considerable. As educational centres, both Kolozsvár and Hermannstadt are now of no little importance. In Kolozsvár, besides the University, which was founded in 1872, there are an academy of law, three gymnasia, and a large number of schools and intellectual and literary associations; while Hermannstadt has also a large Protestant college, and a celebrated scientific and geological museum, as well as a gallery of valuable paintings. This museum occupies the palace of Count Brückenthal, who was governor of the province in the reign of Maria Theresa, and it was destined to play a similar *rôle* in educational development to that of the Johanneum at Gratz. Besides the literary and intellectual tone given to a large section of society in Hermannstadt and Kolozsvár by these various educational agencies, another element is introduced in Hermannstadt, through that city being the official residence of bishops of both the Greek Catholic Church and the Orthodox Greek Church.

In thus glancing at typical Hungarian towns, I must not overlook the prosperous manufacturing city of Kronstadt, not only as one of the most picturesque in the Empire, but as affording another example of the curious grouping of races to be found everywhere in the Austro-Hungarian dominions, the inhabitants consisting of Saxons, Magyars, and Wallachs in nearly equal proportions. Here, as usual, the three races, though living in the same town, are separated from one

another by a sharp dividing line. From the superior commercial aptitude which they generally possess, the Saxons of Kronstadt occupy a decidedly more favourable position financially than the Magyars. The working classes consist mainly of Wallachs, with, however, a considerable proportion of the Székler branch of Magyars, and but very few of the Saxons, who, while increasing in wealth, are here, as everywhere in Transylvania, steadily diminishing in numbers. The town, which was founded in the thirteenth century, occupies a valley almost completely shut in by mountains, and is divided into separate quarters. The oldest portion of the town was founded by the Teutonic knights in 1222; but it has been so frequently destroyed that it now contains nothing of historic interest. The inner town, however, which is still surrounded by walls, is the chief business quarter. The Bolonya quarter is mainly inhabited by Saxon manufacturers, while that known as Bolgárszeg derives its name from the Bulgarian immigrants by whom it was founded five hundred years ago, and is now the Wallach quarter. Between the Bolgárszeg and the inner town is a smaller area occupied exclusively by Gipsies. This complete division of the community, in a prosperous manufacturing town of some thirty thousand inhabitants, into colonies which, though their interests are in every direction absolutely identical, yet persist in keeping aloof from one another, and clinging for

generations to their respective national languages, religions, and customs, is typical of what might be found in a greater or less degree in the majority of the towns in both Austria and Hungary. If space permitted, instances of this curious feature of Austro-Hungarian life in towns might be repeated again and again, from the picturesque old city of Agram, the capital of Croatia, with its never-ending feuds between the Roman Catholic Croats and the Orthodox Serbs, to Lemberg, the capital of the Austrian province of Galicia, with the no less disruptive elements in its population of Poles, Jews, and Ruthenians. Nor is this tendency by any means confined to the lower classes. In nearly all the provincial towns in the Dual Monarchy, and to a certain extent even in the capitals, the higher classes are hardly less broken up into innumerable coteries. It would be no easy task for a foreigner to unravel the many complicated conditions which lead to this grouping of society into smaller sections. In hardly two towns would they be found to be the same, and once more we should find that mere generalisations would be altogether misleading. To take one provincial town that I specially know in Bohemia, besides the ordinary social divisions that result from difference of rank and occupation, the majority of the richer and more cultured members of society are of Germanic nationality, while the bulk of the lower orders and the working classes are Czechs. On the

other hand, the most important and influential families, who hold so high a position that they are necessarily the leaders of society in the neighbourhood, are of Czechish origin and ardently devoted to the cause of their compatriots. With the "nationality" question at fever heat, it is needless to say that social intercourse in this case demands the exercise of a degree of tact and self-control that does not always exist among the somewhat impetuous Austro-Hungarians. Nor is this by any means an exceptional condition of things, for in most towns in the Empire, except the relatively small number in which one single race forms the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants, a similar social problem has to be faced.

Another element which greatly increases the complicated condition of society is due to the increasing social influence of the wealthier class of Jews. Their power, from the financial position they hold in the Dual Monarchy, is immense and far-reaching, and it is generally impossible to exclude them from many sections of society, in which, nevertheless, they are regarded with the strongest aversion. The difficulty is rather increased than diminished by the fact that in Austria-Hungary the wealthy Jew changes his religion far more frequently than elsewhere, and very often accompanies his "conversion" with a change of name. Almost everywhere in Austria and Hungary families of "converted" Jews are to be found, and not a few, especially in Hungary, are

now allied by marriage to noble Austro-Hungarian families. Such marriages are almost invariably between the daughters of wealthy "converted" Jews and more or less ruined members of the aristocracy. Rarely indeed, however, is a marriage heard of between an Austro-Hungarian girl of good birth and even a "converted" Jew, however wealthy he may be. These mixed marriages in the usually exclusive society of Austria-Hungary naturally lead to no little friction and heart-burning. In some coteries Jews who have thus become allied by marriage with noble families of recognised position are received as equals, in others they are rigorously excluded. The social difficulty is increased also by the attitude often assumed by "converted" Jews themselves, as not a few among them endeavour, not always successfully, to acquire a recognised position in "society" by ostentatiously proclaiming the most advanced anti-Semitic opinions.





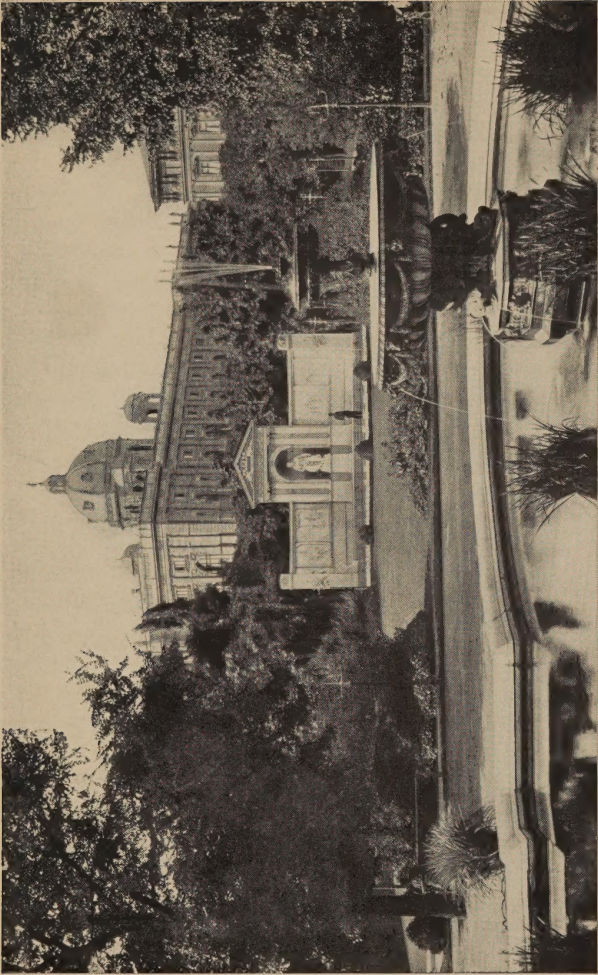
CHAPTER X

VIENNA AND BUDA-PEST

THE capital of so strange an assemblage of provinces as Austria represents could hardly fail to possess many peculiar features of its own. Not only from a political point of view, but in its past history, its curiously varied population, and the picturesque beauty of its situation, Vienna occupies a position that is altogether unique among the great capitals of Europe. While Paris represents the heart and brain of the French people, and its influence is pre-eminent all over the country in politics, learning, and every branch of human progress, the various Austrian races, as we have seen, whether in town or country, cling tenaciously to their own national ideals, and the great majority obstinately resist the domination of the Austro-Germanic race, with which Vienna is especially associated. Still greater is the contrast between Vienna and St. Petersburg. In the Russian capital, the principle of centralisation in the Imperial autocratic government has been carried to the utmost possible limit. In Vienna, on the other hand, this policy has now been finally

abandoned in despair, and in no other Continental country has decentralisation, with the delegation of authority from the national capital to the provinces, been so complete. The contrast with Berlin is not less striking. While Berlin claims the proud position of the chief city of the Germanic world, Vienna, formerly the capital of the emperors of Germany, is now the metropolis of a heterogeneous state, in which a common jealousy of Germanic influence is almost the only bond of union among the mutually hostile nationalities of which it is composed. Nor is the contrast less striking between Vienna and the capitals of France, Germany, and Russia, from a physical point of view. Paris and, to a certain extent, St. Petersburg may rival Vienna in the grandeur of their churches, monuments, and public buildings, but neither can even be compared with it in the beauty of its situation. In this respect, at least, Vienna can regard her rival on the banks of the Spree with contemptuous disdain.

But while St. Petersburg aspires to the leadership of the Slavonic world, and Berlin is no less assiduously advancing her claim to be the metropolis of all the Germanic peoples, Vienna, as the capital of a Slavo-Germanic state, is necessarily the political barometer of Europe. For centuries, indeed, Vienna has been the spot to which all eyes are turned with apprehension whenever the rumblings are heard of a coming storm in European affairs. When the Crusades



PUBLIC GARDENS—VIENNA.

raised the "Eastern Question," which in one form or another has perplexed Europe ever since, Vienna soon became, and has ever since remained, the centre for all the plots and counterplots, the struggles and intrigues that have marked the contest between the Great Powers of Europe for supremacy in the East. In that long struggle Vienna was one of the chief bulwarks for the defence of Western Europe against Turkish aggression, and the magnificent Ring-Strasse, which occupies the place of the now useless fortifications that formerly protected the Austrian capital against her Asiatic foes, may be regarded as a monument of the final overthrow of Turkish power. The capital of the Hapsburgs has not inaptly been compared to a vast rocking-stone. While instantly responding to the least perturbation in the Russian, Turkish, or Germanic dominions of her neighbours on the east, north, or west, she rests nevertheless firmly seated in her place on the banks of the Danube, and smilingly defies all her envious rivals to effect her overthrow. The centre of gravity in the political world may shift from Paris to Berlin; but Vienna, the capital of an Empire that in recent times has been bereft of the fairest of its Italian provinces, and defeated again and again on the battle-field, from the time of Napoleon to the days of Moltke, still remains, not only a political barometer, but the chief city of one of the Great Powers that must be reckoned with in almost every European question.

From yet another point of view the position of Vienna has become altogether exceptional. From the conversion of the "Austrian Empire" of former days into the "Austro-Hungarian Monarchy" of the present, Buda-Pest now shares with Vienna very many of the advantages, and much of the prestige, which the latter had previously enjoyed alone. Pesth, as the capital of the Transleithan half of the Dual Monarchy, is no longer merely the chief city of a province, but claims to be of equal rank with Vienna herself. The Court at Buda-Pest, for example, is that of "the King of Hungary," and this fact alone now keeps in the Transleithan capital a large section of Hungarian society which would, in former times, have been attracted to the Court of the "Emperor" in Vienna. It is typical of the wonderful vitality of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy that, notwithstanding all the misfortunes that have befallen it during its troubled history of the last half-century, both Pesth and Vienna have developed so rapidly that they might almost be described as new cities.

A bird's-eye view of Vienna conveys a somewhat curious impression. In the centre of the Old or "Inner" City stands the beautiful Cathedral of St. Stephen, "the heart of the capital." This ancient city was surrounded by fortifications consisting of ramparts, fosse, and glacis, which were removed in 1856, and upon the site was built the celebrated "Ring-Strasse." This mag-

nificent street, over two miles in length, with the Franz Joseph's Quai on the Donau Canal, completely surrounds the Old or Inner City. It is beyond these limits that the new quarters of the capital have been erected. In their general direction the new streets also run in ever-widening circles around the Ring-Strasse and the Inner City, while they are crossed by others that lead more or less nearly to the central point of St. Stephen's Cathedral, thus giving to the ground plan a curious form which closely resembles a geometrical or garden-spider's web. In the Inner City are the Grand Imperial Palace of the Hofburg and many palatial mansions belonging to a number of great nobles, some of semi-royal rank.

The capital of the Hungarian half of the Dual Monarchy consists of the twin towns of Buda and Pesth. In the centre of Buda rises a rocky hill, crowned with an old fortress and the Royal Palace. On the other side of the Danube, on a low-lying plain, stands the town of Pesth, which, however, has been formally united with Buda as a single city since 1873. Buda, like the Inner City of Vienna, is the most ancient portion of the capital, while Pesth, in its rapid growth during the last half-century, can now boast of modern streets and avenues that rival those of Vienna itself in magnificence. The most beautiful part of Pesth is perhaps the quay and promenade on the banks of the Danube. Along the quay, for a distance of

nearly three miles, there is an unbroken succession of splendid public and private buildings, from which there is a striking view of the picturesque old town of Buda and its palace-crowned hill on the other side of the river.

In most of the newer quarters of both Vienna and Pesth, the grandiose character of many of the streets is greatly increased by the large number of many-storied "mansions" that have been constructed of late years, containing well-appointed flats, fully equal in comfort to any that could be found in London, while unquestionably surpassing the great majority in architectural beauty. Both Vienna and Pesth owe a debt of gratitude to the Emperor Francis Joseph and other members of the Imperial family, who have warmly supported every movement for the improvement of the two capitals. Everything has been done upon a carefully studied plan; the best architects in Europe were invited to Vienna and consulted, and, though there is considerable variety in the style of building, the whole of the new quarters of both capitals presents a unity and harmony of design that greatly increases their imposing appearance. The mistake, that has unhappily been made so often in London, of handing over the construction of important buildings and bridges to men who, however competent as engineers, had received no æsthetic training, would never have been committed in Vienna or Buda-Pest. As an example of the deep interest taken in architecture

by the Austrian Imperial family, I may mention that the plans for the Votiv Church, one of the most beautiful in Vienna, were designed entirely by the late Archduke Maximilian. This church is associated with three of the many tragic events that have befallen the unfortunate Hapsburg family during the last fifty years. It was erected to commemorate the escape of the present Emperor Francis Joseph from an attempt made upon his life in 1853 in which he had been dangerously wounded, and the earlier part of its construction was carried out under the careful supervision of the Archduke, whose affectionate devotion to his brother the Emperor is well known. On the completion of the church in 1879, it was consecrated both as a memorial of his own unhappy fate and also to commemorate the silver wedding of the Empress Elizabeth. A strangely eerie memory, therefore, attaches itself to this beautiful church, as both the Archduke and the Empress Elizabeth were destined to be murdered in foreign lands, the Archduke at Queretaro as Emperor of Mexico, and the Empress in Switzerland.

It would far exceed my limits to attempt a description of the two capitals; Vienna with its imperial Hofburg and princely palaces, Buda-Pest with its royal castle and frowning fortress, or the vast number of museums, libraries, churches, theatres, and public buildings with which both the rival capitals of the Dual Monarchy are so richly endowed. In many respects the life of all great

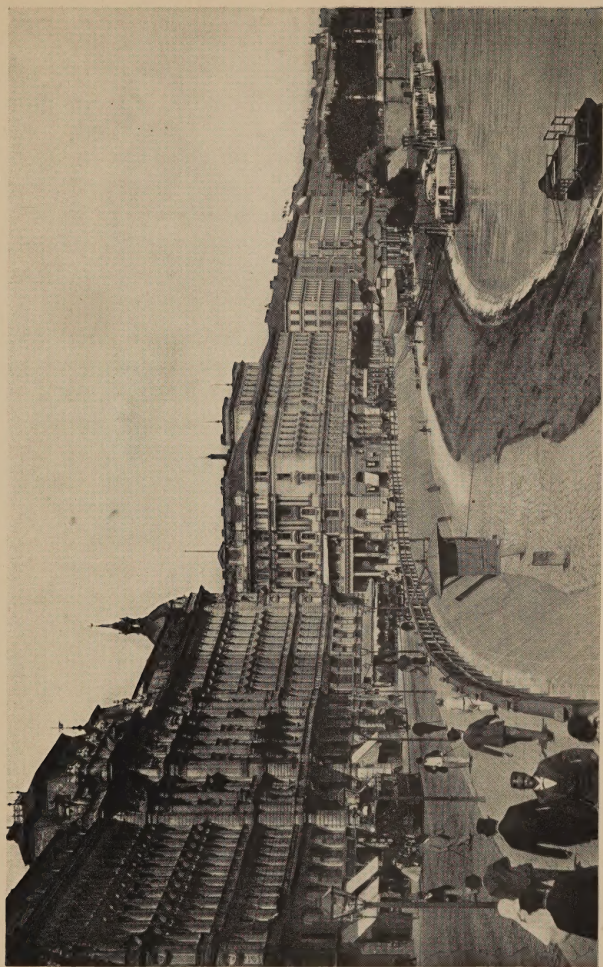
cities has much in common, but in both Pesth and Vienna it has a peculiar atmosphere of its own. The life of Vienna, and to a great extent of Pesth also, resembles more nearly that of Paris than of any other great Continental capital; but even the Parisian, especially of late years, does not possess so great a degree of light-hearted gaiety as the Viennese. It is easy enough in Paris to distinguish between the worker and the holiday-maker. Among the Viennese it often seems as though holiday-making were the real business of life.

An afternoon spent in the Prater—the great park of Vienna—gives the visitor an opportunity of seeing every class of Viennese society. The Prater, which contains about five thousand acres, is one of the finest parks in the world, and, like the Bois de Boulogne in Paris, is the favourite promenade for rich and poor. It is divided into sections by splendid avenues, the most important of which is the Haupt Allée, of immense length and shaded by a quadruple row of fine chestnut trees. This is the special resort of the fashionable world during the season, and perhaps not even in Hyde Park could a grander display be witnessed of valuable horses and fine equipages, while the costumes of many of the fair riders often look far more “Parisian” than those usually seen in the Bois de Boulogne. In fact, Vienna, once the most aristocratic city in Europe, is rapidly becoming one of the most plutocratic, and, with rare exceptions, the most splendid equipages and

striking costumes are not those of the leaders of Viennese society. In Vienna, as everywhere else, extreme simplicity, except on certain special occasions, is the distinguishing mark of the highest classes in their dress and general demeanour in public. Most of the carriages of the long stream of promenaders stop at one or other of the fashionable cafés in the Prater. By a sort of general tacit consent, certain favourite spots in the grounds of the cafés are reserved for regular *habitués*, and the Princess A., the wife of a semi-royal Austrian noble, the Countess B., whose husband and father are among the leaders of an influential political group, and the Baroness Z., whose husband is one of the great powers upon the Stock Exchange, are certain to find their favourite seats vacant, and obsequious waiters on the lookout for their arrival. A careful observer of the interesting scene around him might soon learn not a little of the organisation of Viennese society. Here is a group, unquestionably belonging to the *haute noblesse* of the Empire, as is evident from their quiet, self-possessed demeanour and careful avoidance of anything resembling ostentatious display. A few yards away is seated the Baroness Z., whose annual dressmaker's bill alone would equal the salary of a Cabinet Minister. Red-faced and rotund in form, her figure is a striking contrast to that of the typical Viennese women of the higher classes, and her loud, harsh voice, no less than the splendour of her attire,

her carriage, and the livery of her servants, betrays her Semitic origin. The greater part of the group of friends and admirers that have gathered around her are unquestionably members of her own race—the majority, but not all. Her quick eye has recognised one of the young Austrian aristocrats who had been conversing with his aunt, the Princess A., and she beckons to him with an imperious gesture to come to her. To the imploring expression upon his handsome face, and his appeal for pardon for his rudeness in quitting her, the old Princess responds with a reproachful smile. The two greatest forces in Viennese society have come into conflict; the Old-World traditional pride of race, and the modern ideal of the supreme power of gold. A moment later, the young officer is the centre of an animated group belonging to a section of the Viennese world that differs as widely from that which he has just quitted as though it were in another hemisphere.

The tendency among so many of the wealthy Jews in the provincial towns, and especially in Hungary, to “Magyarise” themselves by means of a change of name and religion, and thus obtain an *entrée* into society, is far more rare in Vienna. The Jewish element in the Austrian capital is able to hold its own without any such manœuvres, and, as a result, the line that separates the coteries into which the Jew is admitted from those from which he is rigorously excluded is far more rigidly maintained. But the Jewish question is

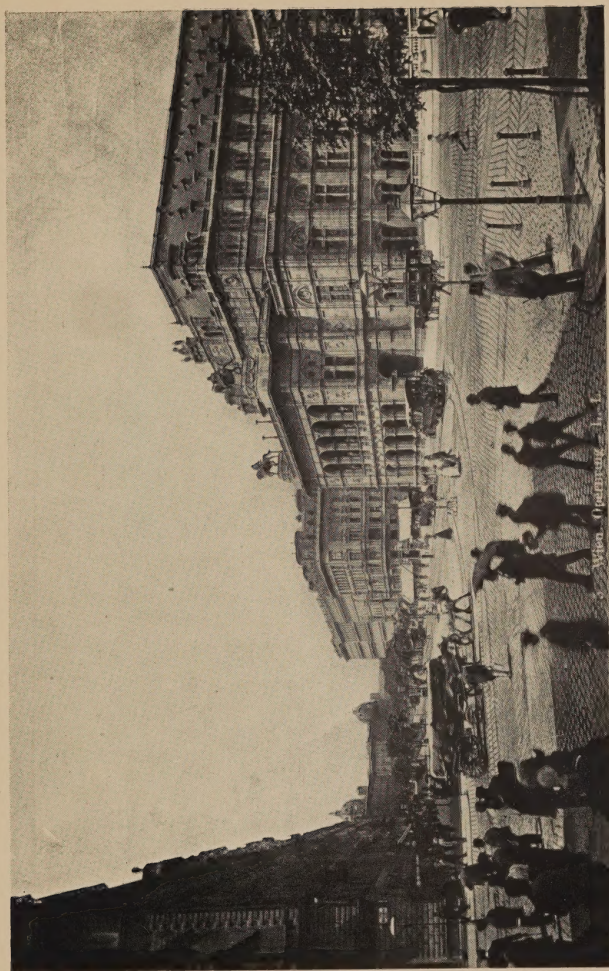


THE QUAY—VIENNA.

by no means the only disruptive element in Viennese society. Among the very highest classes party feeling, resulting from questions of nationality or politics, is not, it is true, so intense as it is in the provinces. Nevertheless, in Austro-Hungarian political circles—and all society in Vienna and Pesth is now more or less interested in politics—the cordial friendship which in England so often exists between families and individuals who are warm supporters of hostile political parties would be almost impossible.

Vienna is now one of the greatest intellectual, scientific, and artistic centres on the Continent, and in the Prater, among the groups of promenaders, we should certainly find many representatives of the medical and scientific professions, of art, music, the drama, and literature. The members of these sections of society may be regarded as forming a link between the two great hostile divisions of the aristocracy and the purely financial classes, with, however, one great difference. The literary, scientific, or medical “Lion” of the day is eagerly welcomed into the *salons* of the Jewish plutocracy. The struggling artist, the young talented physician, the literary or scientific genius of unquestionable merit, but who has still his name to make, might, with rare exceptions, sigh in vain for the recognition of the financial millionaires, though he might almost always count upon the help and friendship of the historic families of the old *noblesse*.

Adjoining the aristocratic Haupt Allée is the Wurstel Prater, the favourite promenade of the working classes. Here another and widely different phase of Viennese life is presented to us, and once more we are reminded of the polyglot character of the Dual Monarchy; for among these "Viennese" we should overhear, in half an hour's walk, almost every language and dialect spoken in the dominions of the Emperor-King. Pesth is no less cosmopolitan than Vienna, but though not half its population is really Magyar, the persistent efforts of the Hungarian Government to extend the use of the national language, and "Magyarise" the nation at large, are already producing their effect. In the Wurstel Prater we find one bond of union, however, that unites all Austro-Hungarians of every nationality and class of life—the passion for pleasure of any kind. This portion of the Prater is essentially the people's playground. Here distractions and amusements of all sorts are obtainable with the lightest purse. And, in spite of all the architectural splendour of Vienna, the wealth of art contained in its palaces and museums, the vast treasures locked up in its churches, and the colossal fortunes enjoyed by the monasteries of the Roman Catholic Church, the purses of the great majority of the Viennese are light indeed. The visitor to Vienna might spend many weeks in the capital, and arrive at the conviction that here, at least, sordid poverty was entirely unknown. He would



THE OPERA HOUSE—VIENNA.

have seen nothing to lead him to suspect its existence in the stately splendour of the crowded streets, inhabited by millionaire bankers and financiers. But, nevertheless, in the back alleys of the city he might have found many thousands who earn their daily bread in "sweating dens," and whose wages hardly suffice to keep body and soul together. The pressure of this grinding poverty naturally falls most heavily upon women. For them, fourpence a day for eighteen hours' labour is no unusual remuneration. I could give endless examples of the terrible amount of distress and suffering endured in silence in Vienna. I will only mention one typical case, which was reported in the Viennese Press as nothing in any way remarkable. A workman, who had unintentionally killed a comrade in a quarrel, was sentenced to a short term of imprisonment, after which he was to pay compensation to the widow of the victim. The compensation was fixed at a penny a day, as he was able to prove that, though a vigorous and hard-working man, the total of his possible earnings would certainly not enable him to exceed that amount. The widow, we are told, accepted the judge's award with tears of gratitude. A penny a day, she affirmed, added to her own earnings, would enable her to keep her children from actual starvation!

The growing proletariat of Vienna, and to a smaller extent that of Buda-Pest and most of the other large manufacturing cities, is unquestion-

ably a political danger; but despite the vast amount of distress among large sections of the working classes, the increase of Socialism, and hatred for the great capitalists, veneration for the Emperor Francis Joseph, personally, is almost universal. Notwithstanding the thoughtlessness and frivolity of character that are so general among Austro-Hungarians of all classes, the unprecedented misfortunes and sorrows of their beloved Emperor have touched a nobler chord in the heart of the people, and loyal devotion to the Sovereign is as real among Magyars and Wallachs, Czechs, Poles, and Serbo-Croats, as it is among the Germanic Austrians themselves. This devotion of the people to the Emperor-King is, however, by no means due to sympathy alone. His immense personal popularity is far more the result of a just appreciation of his character by those whom he has governed for more than half a century. The fascination of his manner towards every one who is brought into contact with him is a quality that is common to nearly all the members of the Imperial family; but no one, I think, who has had more than a merely ceremonious interview with the Emperor could fail to realise that the dominant feature in his character is his absolute sense of honour, his firm determination to do what is right without the least regard to his own personal feelings. As an illustration of this I may mention one of the many self-imposed duties which the Emperor has ful-

filled unremittingly for half a century. In Austria-Hungary, as in most monarchies, nobles of a certain rank have the right of claiming an audience with the sovereign. The Emperor Francis Joseph, however, recognised that misfortune has its privileges as well as rank, and decided that, under certain conditions, he would grant an audience to those among his subjects of every class of life, and members of every nationality, who claimed his protection, and whose case could not, for any reason, be adequately dealt with by means of an ordinary written petition. During more than fifty years, on a fixed day once a week, the Emperor has received one or more such personal applicants. The reception is altogether private, and no official record of it is ever made. Very frequently, indeed, even the name of the applicant is known only to the Emperor himself, as in such cases he is admitted merely on presentation of a written command from the Sovereign that the "bearer" is to present himself on the day and at the hour named. In these audiences there is nothing of the customary ceremonial of the Austro-Hungarian Court. The Emperor receives his subject alone in his private study, and tells him that whatever statements he may make, even though they should entail the confession of a crime, will never be used to his disadvantage, but will be kept as sacredly secret as confession to a priest. One has but to think of the history of Austria during the last half-century, and the

thousands of such audiences that the Emperor has granted to men and women of every rank of life, to realise, not only the marvellous tact that he must have displayed, but also the absolute integrity of his character, for never have even his bitterest enemies accused him of having in any way abused the confidence they had reposed in "his honour as a gentleman."

The splendour and magnificence of the Court pageants in Vienna and Pesth are proverbial, and very many are extremely interesting, as survivals of customs that have long since disappeared elsewhere. Some of the most curious take place during the Easter festivities, when Court life at Vienna, or at Pesth, when the Emperor is in the Hungarian capital, can be seen at its best. One of the most typical of these ceremonials is that of "foot-washing," a custom which, though once universal in all the Courts of Europe, is now performed only in Vienna or in Pesth with undiminished mediæval splendour. In the Austrian capital the ceremony takes place in the Palace of the Hofburg, and in the Hungarian kingdom in the picturesque royal Castle on the hill at Buda. On Holy Thursday, at six o'clock in the morning, twenty-four gorgeous gala carriages, with servants in magnificent liveries, and frequently a mounted escort, drive out of the palace yard and proceed to the poorest quarter of the city. Here the procession separates, as the carriages continue their way to the humble homes of twelve aged

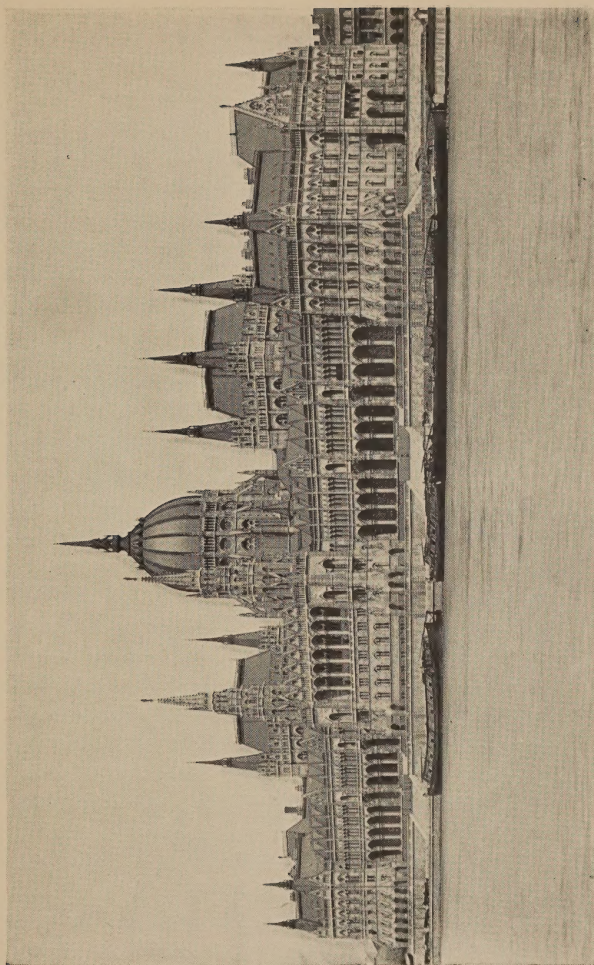
men, and the same number of women, who are then conveyed, clad in a special costume provided for them, to the palace chapel. There High Mass is celebrated, the Emperor and all the members of the Court in the capital taking the sacrament at the same time as the twenty-four beneficiaries. Contrary to the ordinary rites of the Roman Catholic Church, upon this occasion the recipients receive both bread and wine. As soon as the service in the church is over, the Emperor's visitors are conducted by the officers of the Imperial household to the grand banquet-hall, where a sumptuous repast is served them by the highest officials of the Court. This feast is generally little more than a formality, however, for the poor old people, dazzled by all the magnificence around them, are rarely able to do justice to the dishes set before them, in spite of the good-natured encouragement they receive. A little later, they are led to the reception-hall. At the end of this splendid room are placed twenty-four linen-covered tables, at which the men and women take their seats upon benches in two separate groups, the men on one side and the women on the other. The vast hall is soon filled with a large assembly of the most aristocratic members of Austrian—or, at Pesth, of Hungarian—society, the men in gala uniforms, ablaze with orders and decorations, the women in Court dress. After another long pause, the *Oberst-Ceremonien-Meister* enters the hall, and in a loud voice announces the

approach of the Emperor and the members of the Imperial family. The Emperor takes his place behind the chair of one of the old men, and the princes, in the order of their rank, behind the others. The Imperial princesses, formerly with the Empress, take up a corresponding position behind the women. Another banquet is then brought in, served on silver plate, made specially for the occasion, and the Emperor and each of the princes and princesses, taking the plates of the successive courses from the hand of the Court dignitary by whom they are brought, place them before the aged guests whom they are serving. This second banquet, though even more sumptuous than the preceding one, is not actually touched by any of the guests, but having been thus formally presented, each plate is immediately removed and replaced by the succeeding course. The foot-washing ceremony then begins. The shoes and stockings of the old people are removed by officers and ladies of the Imperial household, and a long linen towel having been laid over their knees, the Court Chaplain reads the portion of the Gospel describing the Last Supper. Meanwhile, the Emperor, archdukes, and princesses kneel before the old men and women respectively, and pass a wetted towel over the bare feet of each, wiping them afterwards with another, which is handed to them by officials-in-waiting. The Emperor then washes his hands in a gold basin held by two pages, and when that ceremony is over, two Court

treasurers enter the hall with large trays, upon each of which are placed twelve richly ornamented bags, with long silk loops attached. Taking these bags, each of which contains "thirty pieces of silver," fresh from the mint, and of the value of about three pounds, the Emperor, with a few kindly words, suspends them by their silken cords around the necks of his guests. The Imperial party then leave the hall in the same order as they had entered, and the aged men and women are conducted back to the gala carriages in which they had come, and delighted, though dazzled and bewildered by the magnificence of the ceremony in which they had played so important a part, they reach their homes at length about midday. The "thirty pieces of silver," however, are not the only tangible evidence remaining with them that this glimpse of fairyland at the end of their long, dark, and weary lives was not merely a passing dream. Before the gala carriages finally drive away, a basket is handed to each as a parting gift, containing all the rich viands that they had not dared to eat in so illustrious an assembly, and also the silver dishes, of considerable value, in which they had been presented to them. To this are added an immense bottle of old wine and a large and beautiful bouquet of flowers from the Imperial conservatories.

The festive side of Court life, in both Vienna and Pesth, has unhappily been considerably diminished since the tragic deaths of both the heir

to the throne and the Empress Elizabeth. Nowhere in the Dual Monarchy was the sad fate of the Empress more keenly felt than in the Hungarian dominions. The Hungarians have never forgotten that in the dark period of their history, before the disastrous campaign of 1866 compelled Austria to come to a satisfactory arrangement with the sister kingdom, the Empress had always been a sincere friend of Hungary. Her warm appreciation of the many excellent qualities in the Magyar character, and her sympathy for a brave people who had so long struggled for national freedom and for the recovery of their ancient constitution, unquestionably diminished to no small extent her own popularity in certain sections of Austro-Germanic society; but when at length, after the defeat of Austria at Sadowa in 1866, it became evident that the Austrian Empire must either reconstruct its system of government or disappear from the map of Europe, her influence and, above all, her popularity among all classes of Hungarians, proved of inestimable value to the Emperor and his Minister in the final settlement which rendered Hungary once more a constitutional state. The invincible repugnance of the Empress to all ostentatious display and her avoidance, whenever possible, of taking part in any grand Court function were so entirely contrary to the character of the pleasure-loving Viennese, that the immense services she was able to render to the Empire by her advice and influence upon



NEW HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT—BUDA-PEST.

many occasions were by no means generally realised. Perhaps the best proof of their value has been given by the Emperor himself. Soon after the death of the Crown Prince, the Emperor, addressing the President of the Reichsrath, said: "How much I owe to my dearly beloved wife; how much I have to thank her for; the great support she has been to me during this terribly trying time, I cannot describe or express in sufficiently warm language. I cannot thank Heaven deeply enough for having given me such a consort in the path of my life. Please spread these words from me as widely as you can. The more generally you make them known, the more I shall thank you."

In fact, the "nationality question," which seems, like a subtle poison, to penetrate into every phase of Austro-Hungarian existence, affected even the relations of Austrian, and especially Viennese, society with the Empress, and only too often her well-known sympathy for the Magyars was sufficient to excite the ill will of many Germanic coteries in the Austrian capital, while her kindness of heart and her readiness to help all whom help from her could benefit in any way, irrespective of race, were entirely ignored. The very fact that her efforts to promote the welfare of her people were not confined to members of the Austro-Germanic nationality was an unpardonable sin in their eyes. The numerous cliques and coteries in Vienna whose

political aspirations are entirely inspired from Berlin never forgave the Empress for refusing to aid their schemes for maintaining the Germanic domination of the "minor nationalities"—a policy that must inevitably have resulted in the break-up of the Austrian Empire, and would, it was hoped, lead finally to the realisation of the Pan-Germanic ideal.

Yet the inevitable rivalry between the two capitals, due to the mutual jealousy of the Germanic and Magyar nationalities, has unquestionably led to good results in some directions. Since 1867, Pesth has made almost superhuman efforts to prove to the world that the claim of the Magyars, to take their place as one of the great progressive peoples of Europe, was not unmerited, while Vienna has striven equally to show that, though no longer the sole capital of the Austrian Empire, her prestige in the domains of science, art, and literature remains unimpaired. In 1873, indeed, the feverish efforts of the Viennese for the material development of the city almost brought about a national disaster. Reckless extravagance and imprudent building speculations led to a terrible financial *krach*, which caused widespread ruin among many thousands of private families, and, for a time, very seriously affected the credit of the country generally. More prudent methods were subsequently adopted, but many years elapsed before the effects of the crisis were effaced.

As might be supposed, the life of the highest

classes of society in Pesth closely resembles that of Vienna. Most of the great Hungarian magnates and their families were long so closely associated with the Austrian Court that, as I have already mentioned, they came to be regarded with no little suspicion by very many of the Old-World Magyar landowners who, residing on their estates in the country, were far less susceptible to Austrian influence. This feeling towards the great landowners has diminished since Pesth has been the residence of the royal Court of the restored kingdom of Hungary; but the spirit of jealous rivalry in which the Austrian capital is regarded has remained unchanged. Notwithstanding this, there is much in the general aspect of the people in Pesth that recalls the Viennese. There is the same love of outdoor life; the same gaiety and animation in the streets. In the older portions of Buda-Pest, as in the corresponding quarters of Vienna, the multiplicity of brilliantly painted sign-boards over most of the shops is a feature that always strikes the visitor; but in Buda-Pest the picturesqueness of the scene is increased by the larger proportion of the lower classes of many different races which still habitually wear their national costumes.

During the summer season in Pesth, which is supposed to begin on May-day, the Margarethen-Insel is the favourite resort of society. This beautiful island in the Danube was the property of the Archduke Joseph, who converted it into a

charming park, nearly a mile in length. A hot sulphur spring that rises here, and is believed to be possessed of wonderful medicinal qualities, serves as an excuse for an early morning visit for large numbers of the fashionable world in Pesth, and even if its magic powers should be less beneficial than its votaries affirm, the early morning promenaders at least enjoy the pure air of the Danube and the beautiful scenery of the island park itself. For those whose courage fails them at the thought of drinking the nauseous waters of the sulphur spring, an excellent café is provided, where coffee and all manner of Hungarian delicacies can be obtained. In winter, skating is the fashionable outdoor amusement. Beautiful ice-kiosks are frequently erected on the skating-rinks in the public parks and gardens, and when lighted up for a night-*fête* the fairy-like aspect of the scene will not speedily be forgotten. The carnival at Pesth is one of the gayest seasons of the year. Public masked balls take place all over the city, and though these are not supposed to be attended by ladies of any social position, the brilliancy and beauty of the scene are often too great an attraction to be resisted. The mask in such cases is a real disguise, except for the few friends who are admitted into the secret; and many Hungarian and Austrian ladies of rank not infrequently attend assemblies of this kind, which are decidedly outside the pale of recognised society, so far at least as the feminine half of it is concerned. The au-

dacity of the proceeding is perhaps the greatest charm, and as the fair visitors are always accompanied by friends, no great harm results, for it is typical of both Austrians and Hungarians that, even in their wildest amusements, there is always a certain amount of restraint, and except among the lowest class in towns, anything resembling rowdiness is extremely rare. Private masked balls, to which only recognised members of society are invited, are also frequently given during the carnival season. It has recently been the fashion to combine a masked and costume ball, the invited guests, though wearing masks, being all dressed in costumes carefully copied from portraits of their own ancestors.

Among society amusements, I have already alluded to the gambling mania. Of late, bridge has become as popular as in England, though most of the older forms of gambling still hold their ground. Many of these, indeed, are of a most eccentric character. A few years ago, for instance, there was a widely spread craze for snail races. The "race-course" consisted of a row of long glass rods, one for each snail, placed in a perpendicular position, and accurately marked in centimetres and millimetres. A fashionable club was actually formed in Vienna where this form of "sport" was regularly organised, and here the snails entered for races by their owners were carefully fed and tended. Each was marked with a number upon its shell, and a careful record kept

of the time taken by winners in crawling up the one metre "race-course," with a view to their being properly handicapped in subsequent matches. More than one ancestral estate changed hands as a result of bets upon this absurd pastime. The evil of gambling has, in fact, now reached a point in Austria-Hungary that has compelled the Government to take very active measures for its suppression. In 1902 a sensational trial took place in Vienna, in which a number of the most popular members of Viennese society were prosecuted for playing baccarat at one of the most aristocratic clubs in the city. Though there was no accusation of unfair play, very heavy fines were imposed, and three of the accused, who were foreign nobles of high rank, were banished from the Empire. Fortunately for Austria, the Emperor Francis Joseph, like the German Kaiser, is using all his influence for the suppression of the evil.

There is still a marked difference between the life of Buda and of Pesth though the two now form one single town. Buda, besides being the more ancient, is also decidedly more Germanic, so far as the bulk of the inhabitants is concerned. Here, too, are the town residences of some of the oldest Hungarian families; but except these, the modern fashionable world resides almost exclusively in Pesth. With the restoration of their ancient kingdom, the great majority of the Hungarian nobles were glad to break off all associa-

tions with their past troubles and to begin life again in what is practically the new capital of their country. On all sides there are evidences of this revived national existence in the splendid monumental buildings that have grown up of late years in Pesth as well as in Vienna, associated not only with the political and administrative development of the Dual Monarchy, but with its growth in the domains of science, literature, and art. But these phases of Austro-Hungarian life must be described in a later chapter.





CHAPTER XI

POLITICAL AND OFFICIAL LIFE

IF, as the political economist is too apt to assume as a matter of course, purely material interests really held the foremost place in the hearts of men, the management of human affairs would be greatly simplified. All political questions might then be handed over to experts, whose sole duty it would be to discover "the greatest possible good of the greatest possible number," and the government of the world, conducted upon purely scientific principles, would work with the smoothness and precision of a well-made automatic machine. The "Parliament of Man" and the "Federation of the World" might then become something more than a poetic dream, and a time might really come when—

"The common sense of most shall hold a fretful *world* in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law."

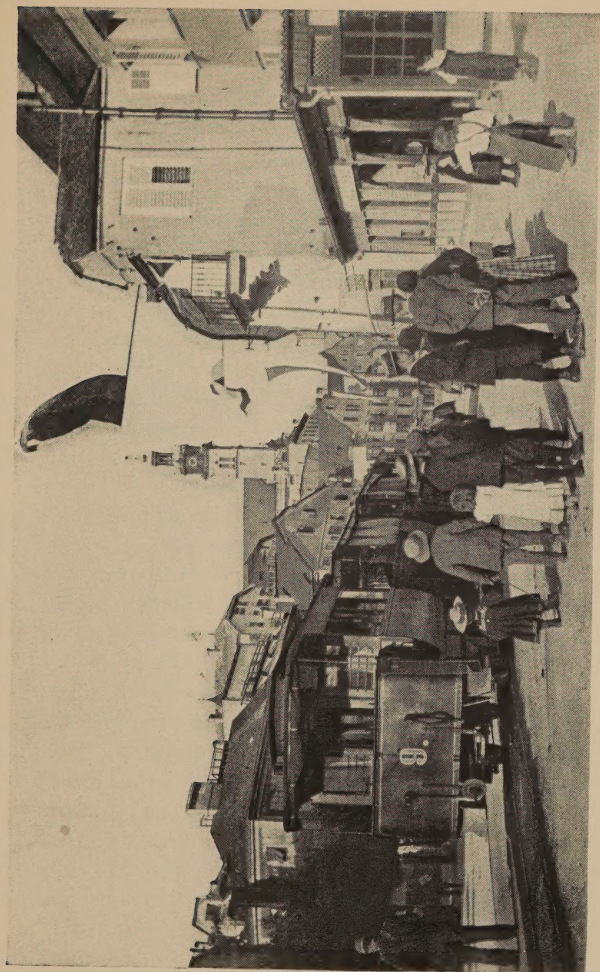
Notoriously, however, the craving for wealth and material well-being is by no means the most potent force in the human character. There are

others, of an infinitely more subtle nature, far less easy to estimate or to control, which, nevertheless, constantly overthrow the most carefully worked-out schemes of statesmen and governments. Even among the most prosaic and practical of races, for example, while men will grumble at the hardships and weariness they must face in working peacefully for their daily bread, they will risk their lives without a murmur for an ideal or a sentiment, the colour of a flag, or in support of a policy which could not possibly be of the smallest direct material advantage to themselves or their families.

How far we are from the time when rival nations will consent to have their affairs settled for them by a "Parliament of Man," rather than in the last resort upon the stricken field, is strikingly shown by the present condition of Austria-Hungary. There we have an almost exact model in miniature of what the "United States of Europe" would be upon a large scale, and one in which we find the same disruptive elements which would soon tear such an international federation to pieces. There is but little doubt that, from a purely material point of view, the policy pursued by the sovereigns of Austria-Hungary from the time of Maria Theresa until 1867 would eventually have promoted, in many respects, the welfare of the people. It would, for example, have been distinctly to the advantage of the less advanced races had they consented to abandon their own

little-known languages, which were altogether unintelligible in the more progressive portions of Europe, and had accepted German in their stead. They would thus not only have provided themselves with a key to all the learning and scientific knowledge and research locked away from them in the German language, but they would have acquired a medium of communication for use in their daily lives and in their commercial transactions that would have been intelligible to every one from Transylvania to Cologne. From a purely utilitarian point of view, they had also everything to gain by renouncing, once for all, their mutual racial jealousies, and uniting their energies for the development of the enormous natural resources of their common fatherland. Peace, with a certainty that they had nothing to fear from foreign invasion, was evidently essential to their material well-being, and nothing would have conduced more to ensure their protection against foreign enemies than a union of all the Austro-Hungarian races in one single people, not only governed by the same sovereign, but one in language and in their national aspirations. This was the grand ideal upon which the Empress Maria Theresa had set her heart, but, wiser than her successors, she adopted only the gentlest means to attain her end.

In the Hungarian dominions Latin was for many centuries the official language, and until less than a century ago it was universally spoken



IQLS, A FAVOURITE SUMMER RESORT OF THE IMPERIAL FAMILY.

in polite society. Indeed, a large proportion of the higher classes was totally ignorant of Magyar, and even so recently as 1848 many of Kossuth's most influential colleagues were unable to speak a dozen words in their national tongue. It was, therefore, a comparatively easy task for the Empress Maria Theresa to induce the great Magyar nobles, whom she treated with special consideration, and constantly invited to Vienna, to abandon the use of Latin, which, after all, was a foreign language, in favour of German, which was universally spoken at the Viennese Court. It was widely different, however, when her son and successor, Joseph II., attempted to extend the use of German to all classes of society among the many races of the Empire. The Emperor Joseph II. had unquestionably the best interests of the people at heart, but he was wholly wanting in the exquisite tact and personal fascination of manner that had made his mother, for forty years, one of the most popular sovereigns that Europe had ever known. The Emperor's attempt to impose German upon all his subjects was not only a complete failure, but it gave to all the Austro-Hungarian languages a significance which they had not hitherto possessed. From that moment the retention of the national language of each race became the war-cry of all the peoples of the Empire, in their struggle to maintain their distinct nationalities. Literary associations were at once formed by members of almost every race "for

the protection of the national language," and these societies quickly became the centres of political separatist movements, which grew rapidly in importance every year. From the death of Joseph II. until 1866 the history of the domestic affairs of Austria is that of an unceasing struggle between the Government of Vienna and the Magyar and Slavonic races, which resisted, by all the means in their power, every attempt to "Germanise" either their language or their institutions. The result showed the utter hopelessness of an attempt to change the deeply rooted instincts of a people by compulsion alone.

The climax came at last in a series of unprecedented disasters. In 1848-49 the whole Magyar race was in open revolt, and the Austrian armies, beaten again and again by the Hungarian insurgents, were only saved from complete overthrow by the timely intervention of Russia. The news of the surrender of the Hungarian army at Vilagos was communicated, not to the Emperor of Austria, but to the Emperor Nicholas, by the Russian Commander-in-chief, Prince Paskievitsch, in the long-remembered words, "Hungary lies at the feet of your Majesty." The insult to Austria was deeply resented in Vienna, as was also the erection of a monument by the Russian General Lüders at Kronstadt in Transylvania to commemorate "The Conquest of Hungary by Russia." The second warning came in the form of the Italian campaign and the loss of Lombardy

in 1859. The third and final disaster was the result of the war of 1866, when Austria was again completely defeated, this time by Prussia in the battle of Sadowa. From the leadership by Prussia of the North German Confederation, which five years later developed into the new German Empire, it became evident at once that for Austria to continue her policy of attempting to "Germanise" her Magyar and Slavonic nationalities would simply be to play into the hands of the Prussian statesmen who regarded their own country as the "Heir Apparent" of the then seemingly moribund Empire of Austria. The defeat at Sadowa necessitated a complete reversal of the policy hitherto followed by the Government of Vienna. The protection of the nationalities had now become essential to the very existence of the Austrian Empire. The establishment of a vigorous Magyar kingdom in the Hungarian dominions of the Crown offered the most effective barrier to the extension of Prussian influence towards the Black Sea, which many of the more ardent German politicians hoped might one day be reached by the aid of the long chain of Germanic settlements in Northern Hungary that extends nearly as far as Transylvania. Here, as we have seen, is a considerable Saxon population which has always remained in close touch with the German Fatherland. Beyond lay the kingdom of Roumania, already in the hands of a Prussian Prince. The road to the Adriatic, upon

which Prussia has long been casting loving eyes, was also immediately barred by granting new concessions to the Slovenes in Styria, Carinthia, Carniola, and the maritime provinces, while the use and development of their language was encouraged in every way.

The new policy that Austria was now compelled to adopt rendered a complete reorganisation of the system of government inevitable. A half-hearted attempt had been made in the same direction in 1860, as a result of the terrible lesson that had been learned in the disastrous war of the preceding year. This new Constitution, however, had failed to satisfy any of the nationalities in the Empire, and I only describe it now because it nevertheless eventually served as a basis for the final settlement that was made in 1867. By this "Diploma" of 1860 the Provincial Constitutions, which had been suspended since 1849, were restored, and the Provincial Diets of the various States, including Hungary, were invited to send Deputies to an Imperial Parliament to be held at Vienna. The Upper House of this new Parliament was composed of Imperial archdukes, nobles chosen by the Emperor, and Prelates of princely rank. Purely provincial matters were left in the hands of the Provincial Diets, and those only could be discussed in the Imperial Parliament which related to the foreign, military, financial, and other affairs of the whole Empire. Whenever the matter discussed referred to the Austrian pro-

vinces only, the Hungarian Deputies were to leave the House, the remaining members of which would then debate and vote upon the question in their absence. This Constitution by no means satisfied the Hungarians, who demanded an independent Parliament of their own at Pesth, and also the restoration to their kingdom of the four provinces of Slavonia, Croatia, Dalmatia, and Transylvania, which had been taken from them by Austria in 1848. They were also indignant at the manner in which the elections of the Provincial Legislatures were manipulated, so as to ensure the return of members who might be relied upon to choose as Deputies for the Imperial Parliament at Vienna men who would blindly support the policy of the Imperial Government. Under such conditions, the Magyars in Hungary proper refused to send any Deputies to Vienna at all. The only province associated with Hungary that did so was Transylvania; but there the property qualification of the voters for the Provincial Diet had been reduced, and new electoral districts formed, so that a majority of the members should be Wallachs and Saxons. As a natural result, the fourteen Deputies elected by the Transylvanian Diet for the Imperial Parliament at Vienna were, with the exception of four Saxons, almost illiterate Wallachs; but, notwithstanding, the Government decided to accept their votes as those of "the representatives of Hungary" in all legislation relating to that kingdom. The Magyars,

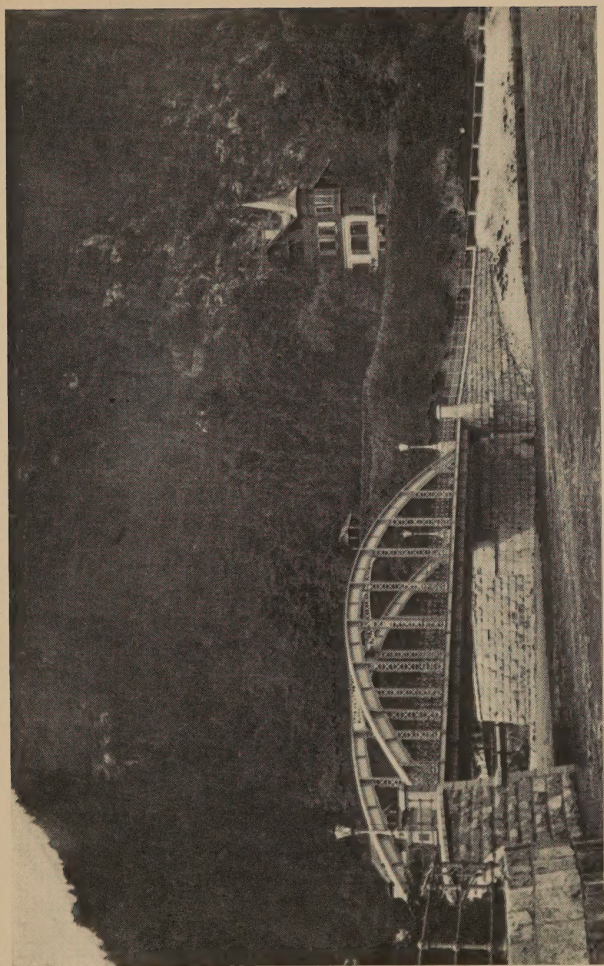
however, continued to maintain their attitude of passive resistance, and at length the Viennese Government suspended all the Parliamentary and municipal institutions in Hungary, so that the autocratic system was restored once more. But the Imperial Parliament in Vienna did not long survive this high-handed measure. The representatives of the Czechish and Moravian nationalities held aloof, and in 1865 the majority of the other members of the Reichsrath resolved to follow their example, on the ground that they could not "constitutionally discuss and vote upon measures that affected one half of the Empire, when the same measures were imposed by autocratic decrees, and without any discussion at all, upon the other half." A few months later the storms of war burst upon the unhappy country for the third time, and the defeat at Sadowa gave the *coup de grâce* to the fatal *régime* that had so nearly destroyed the Empire.

The reorganisation of the Constitution was entrusted to Count Beust, but the hand that really moulded it into a workable shape was that of the great Hungarian statesman, Francis Deak, who, I should add, was supported and aided in every way by the late Empress Elizabeth. The old reactionary party had been completely discredited by the series of misfortunes that had befallen the monarchy, and the Emperor, freed at last from the pressure it had exercised upon him hitherto, loyally accepted his position as a Constitutional

Sovereign. At the present day it is not difficult to see that the defeat at Sadowa was really a blessing in disguise. It cleared the political atmosphere, and when the clouds had passed away Austria-Hungary emerged from the tempest in an entirely new light. She was no longer a great Teutonic State, the rival of Prussia in the Germanic world, but an agglomeration of nationalities in which the German race had ceased to be the dominant element. The creation of a workable constitution for such a strangely mingled mosaic of races was no easy task. The experience of 1860-67 clearly showed that government by a single Imperial Parliament at Vienna was utterly impracticable. The Empire was therefore divided into two groups of nationalities. To the Hungarian, or Transleithan, group were allotted the kingdom of Hungary proper, the principality of Transylvania, the kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia, and the territory of Fiume, while the Cisleithan, or Austrian, dominions comprised all the remaining States and provinces.

The Cisleithan dominions and the Hungarian kingdom became two practically independent States, each with a separate Government, Ministry, and Parliament of its own, though both owe allegiance to the same Sovereign. The foreign affairs of the Dual Monarchy, however, and the control of the Army and Navy, as well as certain financial matters, were reserved as common to

both States. This inevitably entailed a very considerable difficulty. If the single Imperial Parliament at Vienna had been found unworkable, the establishment of two Parliaments in its place, one at Vienna and the other at Pesth, representing the generally divergent policies of Austria and Hungary, necessarily increased yet more the danger of a dead-lock whenever they had to decide questions common to both. This difficulty was met by the creation of a third legislative body, whose authority should be supreme within the Empire in all matters with which it is competent to deal. This body, an ingenious invention of Francis Deak, known as the "Delegations," consists of two groups of sixty members each, elected by the Austrian and Hungarian Parliaments respectively. Forty members of each group are elected by the Lower House (*Abgeordnetenhaus*) and twenty by the Upper House (*Herrenhaus*) of each Parliament. The Delegations meet at Vienna and Pesth in alternate years, and decide all questions relating to the common, foreign, military, and financial affairs of the Dual Monarchy. A very novel expedient is adopted in the case of the Delegations to avoid the friction and unseemly disputes common to most Parliamentary assemblies on the Continent, and above all in Austria-Hungary. The two sections meet separately, and may only communicate their respective decisions to each other in writing. After exchanging their views in this way three times,



VIEW OF ISCHL, / FAVOURITE COUNTRY RESORT OF THE IMPERIAL FAMILY.

should they still have failed to arrive at an agreement, the whole hundred and twenty members, or an equal number of both groups, meet and vote upon the question, which is then decided by a simple majority; but no discussion is permitted when the two Delegations are thus united. Their decisions are finally carried out by the three Ministries which are common to the Austrian and Hungarian monarchies, those of Foreign Affairs, War, and Finance.

In purely domestic matters each half of the Dual Monarchy is controlled by its own Parliament, consisting of an Upper and a Lower House. In the Austrian, or, more correctly speaking, Cisleithan, Parliament the Upper House is composed of all the Imperial archdukes who possess residential estates within the Cisleithan dominions; about seventy nobles, who, having been chosen by the Emperor from among the largest landed proprietors, have been created hereditary peers; seventeen archbishops and bishops of princely rank; and, finally, about one hundred and forty life members, created by the Emperor on account of the services they have rendered to Church or State. The Lower House, the duration of which is for six years, now consists of four hundred and twenty-five members, who represent five classes of electors, over twenty-four years of age, in each province. Eighty-five of these representatives are chosen by the great landowners; twenty-one by chambers of commerce and certain industrial

corporations; one hundred and eighteen by residents in urban districts who pay over fifty florins in direct taxation; one hundred and twenty-nine by inhabitants of rural districts who possess a corresponding qualification; and seventy-two by all electors who do not belong to any of the other groups, but have a residential qualification of six months.

In one respect the Austrian electoral system presents a very unusual feature, as women possessing landed property of the same value as that of electors of the first class enjoy as complete a political franchise as men. The Deputies are paid at the rate of sixteen shillings and eightpence for each day's attendance at the House, and also receive an indemnity for their travelling expenses. The payment of members has, however, had the unfortunate result of greatly increasing the number of "professional" politicians, who, being dependent upon their pay, are far more anxious to secure re-election by encouraging the racial prejudices of the lower classes than they are to adopt a really statesmanlike and patriotic policy. The violent language and conduct in which they indulge is generally due to their anxiety to have a full report of their proceedings described in the local Press in a way that appeals most strongly to the lowest, but most numerous, class of their constituents. The "professional" politicians, however, are by no means the only offenders in this respect, and the disgraceful scenes that often oc-

cur in both the Austrian and Hungarian Parliaments will inevitably discredit the whole system of Parliamentary government in the Dual Monarchy, unless more effective disciplinary measures are adopted. In December, 1902, a complete list was published in Vienna of the abusive expressions hurled by irate politicians at one another in the Austrian Chamber. They had all been recorded in the official reports of the proceedings of the House, and the list, arranged in alphabetical order, consisted of 1763 different terms of opprobrium. A large proportion were of zoölogical origin, ranging from ass to zebra, and they certainly evinced considerable ingenuity on the part of their inventors.

Besides the Reichsrath in Vienna, each of the seventeen provinces of Austria has a Diet of its own. These Diets possess considerable powers, and can legislate upon all matters which refer exclusively to their own territories, such as local taxation, public works, and the control of ecclesiastical and charitable institutions. They consist of one chamber only. The archbishops and bishops of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches whose sees are situated within the province are *ex officio* members, as is the rector of the university in every province which is endowed with such an institution. The other members are elected by various social groups — landowners paying a certain sum in direct taxes, the amount varying in different provinces; citizens in towns

enjoying municipal rights; industrial and commercial corporations; and, finally, the inhabitants of the rural communes. With each Diet there is also a *Landesausschuss*, or executive body, the president of which is appointed by the Emperor. In some of the larger provinces, such as Bohemia and Galicia, there are other elected bodies, corresponding in some respects to the British county councils, which represent the *Bezirke*, or districts. Finally, the communes have also elected councils and executive committees to manage their affairs, while in those towns which have obtained special statutes the communal committee is represented by a corporation.

The Hungarian Parliament, or Reichstag, is organised upon a somewhat different system. In the Upper Chamber, or House of Magnates, the hereditary members are far more numerous than in Austria. Besides the Imperial archdukes who possess landed property in Hungary, certain dignitaries of the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant Churches, and about a dozen official members, there are over eight hundred nobles, princes, counts, and a small number of barons who legally possess the hereditary right to a seat in the Chamber. By the present constitution, however, those only exercise the right who pay a land-tax upon their estates of not less than three thousand florins. There is, besides, an important group of life members, of varying number, who are nominated by the King, but whose nomina-

tion must subsequently be ratified by the "Table of Magnates." The Representative Chamber, on the other hand, is somewhat more democratic in its composition than that of the Austrian monarchy, the electors requiring only a very low property qualification in both urban and rural districts. The Hungarian voters also enjoy the doubtful privilege of acquiring the franchise on reaching their twentieth year, instead of their twenty-fourth, as in Austria, while candidates for election to Parliament, who in Austria must be over thirty years of age, are eligible in Hungary on the completion of their twenty-fourth year.

There is another and yet more striking difference between the constitutions of the Austrian and Hungarian halves of the Dual Monarchy, and it is one that cannot fail to have far-reaching results in the future. In the Austrian dominions, as we have seen, there are seventeen Provincial Diets, each the centre of as complete a system of Home Rule as that with which Mr. Gladstone proposed to endow Ireland. In the Hungarian kingdom, on the contrary, the only province possessing autonomy is that of Croatia-Slavonia. In all the rest of the kingdom, notwithstanding the many nationalities that it contains, Magyar is everywhere the official language, and Magyar influence is steadily growing in spite of all opposition. By the agreement entered into with Hungary in 1868, Croatia-Slavonia enjoys complete

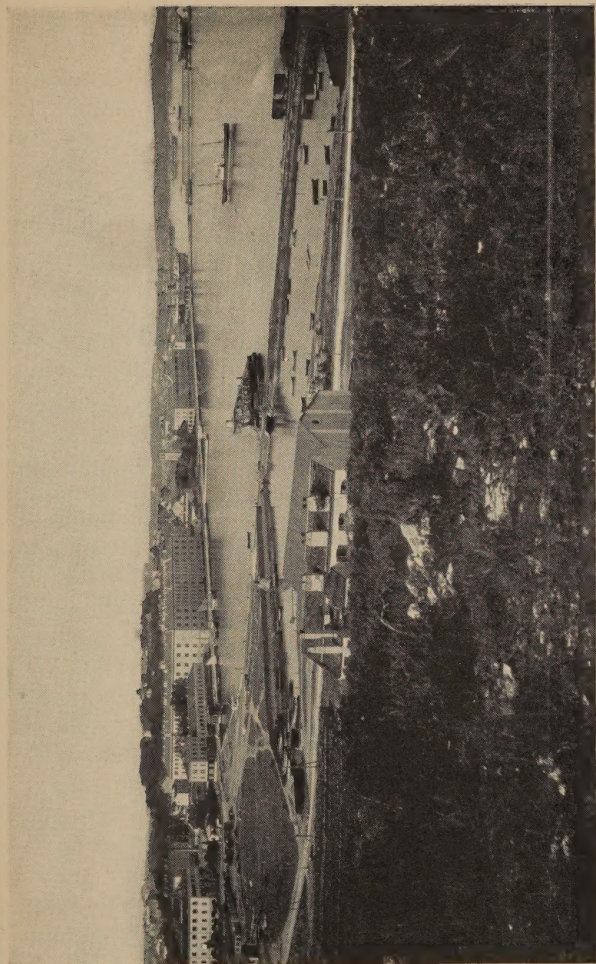
self-government in all matters relating to domestic legislation and administration, justice, religion, and public instruction. The Croatian Diet is organised upon a model resembling that of the Austrian provinces. It consists of a single Chamber, but, besides the archbishops and bishops, between thirty or forty Magnates, or most influential nobles, are members, as well as the elected representatives of the urban and rural districts. Croatia-Slavonia sends forty Deputies to the Lower Chamber of the Parliament at Pesth, besides three delegates to the Upper House, and of these forty-three representatives one Croatian Magnate and four Deputies must be chosen as members of the Hungarian Delegations which I have already described.

The arrangement between Hungary and Croatia-Slavonia, however, has by no means worked smoothly. By this compact it was agreed that, while fifty-six per cent. of the Croatian revenue should be devoted to the needs of the common administration of Hungary and Croatia-Slavonia, viz., to the Army and the service of the National Debt and Public Works, the autonomous Government of Croatia should retain the remaining forty-four per cent. for purely local requirements. The present dissatisfaction of the Croats with this arrangement appears to be not altogether unreasonable, as since 1898 the most important indirect taxes upon articles consumed in Croatia-Slavonia, especially those on sugar, petroleum, spirits, and

beer, have to be paid at the place of production, mainly in Hungary, instead of, as formerly, in Croatia, and they are thus now comprised in the Hungarian revenue. As a result the revenue of Croatia has been steadily diminishing at the rate of over £20,000 a year since 1898, and the growing needs of the country in education and other branches of national development have been seriously neglected. It is typical of the peculiar character of Austro-Hungarian political affairs that when, in the spring of 1903, the Croatian Nationalist leaders were endeavouring to raise a great popular denunciation against the union with Hungary, their demonstration of this real and eminently material grievance excited far less popular indignation than the substitution of Magyar for Croatian names upon the railway stations in Croatia-Slavonia. The serious riots that occurred at Agram and other towns in May, 1903, were due, in their origin, almost exclusively to this supposed insult to the Croatian nationality, and it was only by the skilful management of the Parliamentary leaders that a demand for a reform in the system of taxation was added to that for protection of the national language.

The Austro-Hungarian Constitution is unquestionably still in a transition state, but the brief account I have given of its general organisation will convey an idea of the extremely complicated nature of its machinery. During the last few years there have been numerous changes in the

arrangements for representation in Parliament and in the Provincial Diets ; but, unimportant though many of them would seem to be, it would need a volume to describe their real bearing, the racial jealousies to which they are due, and the persistent efforts of each nationality so to manipulate the popular representation as to secure some special advantage at the expense of other races. Even the system of the Delegations, which it was hoped would obviate the difficulty inseparable from the arrangement of the common affairs of the Dual Monarchy by the two independent Parliaments, has failed repeatedly to provide a workable compromise, and, but for the patience and skilful statemanship of the Emperor, might have been unable to prevent a complete separation between the two monarchies. The common financial matters also necessarily entail questions of extreme delicacy, especially in the adjustment of the exact proportion payable by Austria and Hungary respectively. This arrangement, known as the *Ausgleich*, has been one of the most fertile sources of friction between the two countries. In 1868 the proportions were fixed at seventy per cent. for Austria and thirty for Hungary. They have since been modified upon several occasions, but each time only after long and acrimonious discussion. The last *Ausgleich* compromise expired several years ago, and since that time temporary arrangements have had to be made for carrying on the business of the Empire. In Janu-



A VIEW OF POLA.

ary, 1903, an agreement was finally made by the Austrian and Hungarian Premiers, but this will require to be ratified by their respective Parliaments. Some idea of the enormous difficulty entailed by the jealous rivalry of the Austro-Hungarian nationalities can be formed from the fact that, upon this question alone, there were according to the *Neues Wiener Tageblatt*, no fewer than two hundred and forty-three formal meetings between the Austrian and Hungarian Ministries during the seven years over which the negotiations were protracted. The difficulty so long presented by a settlement of the *Ausgleich*, and an agreement as to the respective contributions of Austria and Hungary to the common expenditure, is the more remarkable, as by far the greater part is devoted to the maintenance of the Army and Navy, perhaps, the only common institutions, except the Crown itself, which both countries regard with equal pride and affection. Ever since the defeat at Sadowa, Austria-Hungary has been steadily reorganising and strengthening her armed forces, and, as compared with the other Great Powers, her military and naval position is now widely different from what it was in the dark days of her history when, thirty-seven years ago, in spite of all the heroism of her soldiers, she was defeated on almost every battle-field.

The progress of the Dual Monarchy in the development of her Army has been so quiet and unobtrusive, there has been so complete an absence

of the dramatic display so often exhibited by the great Germanic War-Lord over the border, that it is not generally realised that Austria-Hungary, in spite of all her misfortunes in the past and her chronic domestic difficulties, could now launch a well-equipped and highly trained force of nearly two millions of men against the enemy in case of war, and, by calling out all her reserves in a supreme struggle of life and death, could place nearly four millions of men in the field. Military service is universal and compulsory from the twenty-first to the forty-second year, and comprises three years in the line, followed by seven in the active reserve, two in the *Landwehr* or the *Honvedseg*, and finally two successive periods of five years each in the first and second *Landsturm*. The Austrian *Landwehr* and the Hungarian *Honvedseg* are special national military forces which in time of peace are only called out for training. Service in the line is reduced to one year for those who have passed their examinations in certain schools, and exemptions are also granted, as in most Continental armies, in many special cases, such, for example, as when the recruit is the sole support of a widowed mother or a grandparent. Several schemes for the improvement of the Army are now under consideration. Among these is the proposed reduction of the service in the line to two years instead of three, a reform that would be an immense boon to the wage-earning classes, and in February,

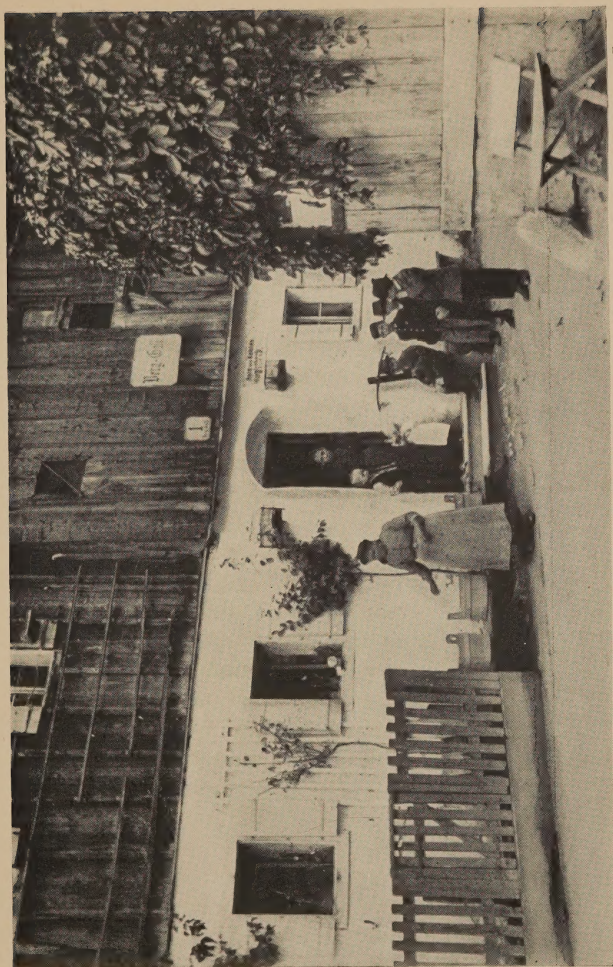
1903, a promise was given by the Austrian Minister for National Defence that every effort would be made to carry out the project.

During the last few years considerable attention has been devoted to an increase in the efficiency of the marine forces. The Austro-Hungarian Navy is intended mainly as a coast defence, but a plan has been adopted by which during the next eight or ten years its power will be considerably increased. The addition will comprise a new fleet of fifteen armour-clads of from six to nine thousand tons, fourteen cruisers, half of which will be of from four to seven thousand tons, and the remainder of smaller size, together with fifteen torpedo gunboats and ninety torpedo-boats.

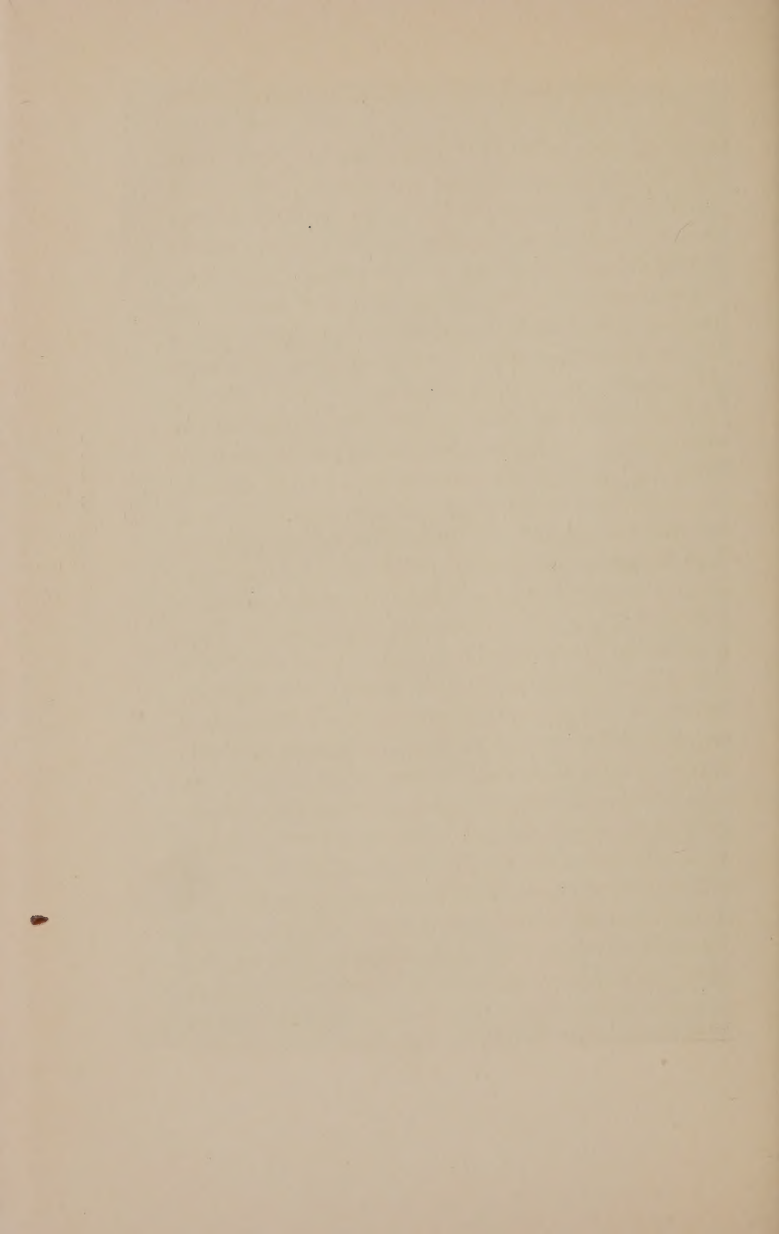
Other institutions belonging to the whole of the Dual Monarchy are those of the Common Court of Public Accounts, dealing with Austro-Hungarian financial matters, the Imperial Court of Justice, and the Court of Judicial Administration and Cassation. These all sit at Vienna, and their jurisdiction extends over the whole Empire. Subordinate to them are the Supreme Courts of Austria and of Hungary, which sit respectively at Vienna and at Buda-Pest. To these institutions of common interest to both monarchies should be added the Austro-Hungarian State Bank, which alone is empowered to issue bank-notes, and is possessed of a charter renewable from time to time. The present charter will expire in 1910.

The Army and Navy represent the only insti-

tutions in the Dual Monarchy that closely touch all sections of society among all races alike. For every nationality the maintenance of the Army in a thorough state of efficiency is a matter of supreme importance, and here at least we might expect to find a bond of common interest and mutual goodwill. Among the higher classes it unquestionably exists. In society Austro-Hungarian officers are now welcomed everywhere, whatever their original nationality may be. The feeling, however, by no means extends to the lower ranks of the Army. The racial prejudices of the men are rarely diminished by their military service, and when stationed in a district mainly inhabited by another race, they remain distinctly "foreigners." At the same time, the intense hostility with which the Army was formerly regarded by nearly all the non-Germanic races has now completely disappeared. Some forty years ago it was looked upon as the sole reliable support of the Austrian Empire, and was detested accordingly by all who were dissatisfied with the existing *régime*. For instance, an English visitor to Pesth in 1861 described the system of social "boycotting" to which Austrian officers were then subjected by the Magyars. Cafés frequented by them at once forfeited the custom of all the members of Hungarian society. This feeling of hostility to the Army was, however, by no means confined to the Magyars. It was, in fact, generally regarded as a nationality apart. "To what nation-



A STREET SCENE AT ISCHL



ality do you belong?" asked the same writer of an Austrian officer some six years later. "To none," was the reply; "I am a child of the Army." Such an answer to the question would assuredly not be given at the present day; but, notwithstanding, the *esprit de corps* among the officers diminishes, to a great extent, the rigidity of the lines that separate the various races from one another in civilian society.

Compulsory military service has converted the Army from an instrument of autocratic government into a national institution, and the change has brought with it several of the difficulties that have to be met in civil life. The language question, for example, is a source of considerable difficulty. It is, of course, essential, from a military point of view, for a national army to be commanded in one single language in the field. Nothing, perhaps, shows more clearly the factious nature of the opposition adopted by a large class of the popular leaders than an agitation upon this matter which was raised a year or two ago. The men present at parade were called upon to answer to their names in *one* single German word, instead of in the babel of tongues that would have resulted had each replied in his own language. The custom was suddenly seized upon as an insult to the nationalities, and soon became one of the burning questions of the day. Another instance of racial animosity was presented by the serious Hentzi incident in 1898. Immediately after the

tragic death of the late Empress, the Magyars in Buda-Pest, ever grateful for the sympathy she had shown for them in their past misfortunes, subscribed in a few weeks the large sum of over 350,000 florins to erect a monument to her memory. The Emperor, anxious to respond to the spirit in which the offering was made, decided that the monument to the Empress should be erected upon the site then occupied by another, in the Hungarian capital, to General Hentzi, the Austrian commander by whom Pesth had been bombarded during the Magyar insurrection in 1849. The existence of this monument had always been regarded with intense resentment by the Magyars, not only as recalling the destruction of their capital by the Austrian army, but also because Hentzi, who not long before had been a prisoner in their hands, had resumed his command in the Austrian service in flagrant violation of his parole. The better class of Austrians themselves, who had no reason to be proud of Hentzi, were by no means sorry that his monument should disappear; but, notwithstanding, the proposal for its removal, to make place for the memorial to the late Empress, at once led to a furious outcry throughout Germanic Austria which it needed all the patience and tact of the Emperor Francis Joseph to allay.

It would be necessary to go into too great detail to give a clear idea of the complicated mosaic of political parties in the Austro-Hungarian Parlia-

ments. In the Austrian Parliament, for example, there are German Liberals, National Germans, and German Conservatives, Poles, Ruthenians, and at least three groups of Czechs, Left Centre, Clerical, Anti-Semites, Bohemian Feudal Conservatives, Moravian Centrals, and many more. With a Parliament thus divided, it is, of course, impossible for any Ministry to count upon a majority without securing the support of a number of separate and more or less antagonistic parties, and the results are often strangely bewildering and seemingly contradictory. In Austria, indeed, the policy supported by a member of the Lower House can rarely be relied upon as indicating the real political opinions of the majority of his constituents. The group to which he belongs would be in a hopeless minority and utterly powerless if he did not act in concert with others, often in support of objects to which his own constituents are indifferent and sometimes even opposed. Thus, for example, it has often happened that members representing districts in which the Jews are especially unpopular, or in which there is strong feeling against clerical intolerance, will nevertheless act in concert with parties which are opposed to the Anti-Semites, or are strong supporters of the Roman Catholic Church, in order to secure some other end which their constituents have yet more at heart. The parties in the Hungarian Parliament are less complicated, the chief groups being the Liberals, the Nationalists, and

the Independents, the latter demanding complete separation from Austria, though still recognising the Emperor as their King. These parties, again, are broken up into numerous subdivisions, most of which support some policy specially favoured by one or other of the many nationalities.

The real political aspirations of the Austro-Hungarian peoples can only be correctly gauged by the trend of political thought as evinced outside the Parliaments and Diets. Here we should find that, besides the all-pervading racial divisions, there is also a steady growth of Socialistic ideas, though not always of a revolutionary character, especially among the working classes in towns and in many of the poorer agricultural districts. But the movements that are of the most vital consequence to Austria-Hungary, and which will probably have most important results when the destinies of the Dual Monarchy are no longer guided by the present Emperor, are represented by the Pan-Germanic and Pan-Slavonic aspirations, together with the smaller, but steadily growing, demand for a union of the Hungarian and Austrian Wallachs with their kinsmen in Roumania. The importance of all three of these movements is considerably increased by the fact that they are supported and mainly controlled by foreign politicians. To the agitation among the Wallachs I have already alluded in the chapter on Transylvania; that among the Germans and Slavs, however, demands a somewhat fuller explanation.

But little is generally known in England of the Pan-Germanic movement, and still less of the immense resources that its leaders now have at their disposal. The movement was first organised as the Pan-Germanic League in 1894, and its programme was declared to be "The reunion of all the Germanic peoples in a common Fatherland." The countries which, by this scheme, are to be united in the German Empire are Holland, German Switzerland, the Tyrol, the whole of Austria-Hungary except Galicia, Bukowina, and possibly the small portion of Hungary inhabited almost exclusively by Magyars. This might be permitted to exist as a small protected state, but the annexation of all the rest, including Saxon Transylvania and the Austrian ports on the Adriatic, is essential. This project, extravagant as it sounds, is by no means the dream of irresponsible political enthusiasts. The whole scheme is organised, in every detail, with the thoroughness for which the Germans are remarkable, and it is warmly supported and liberally financed, not only by ambitious politicians, but by hard-headed business men and members of every class of society. To promote its object, the League has formed "centres" in all the countries whose inhabitants are to be "Germanised," but it is in Austria-Hungary that its chief efforts have of late been concentrated. These "centres" are directly in touch with the headquarters in Germany, by which they are financially supported and rigidly

controlled. Through these centres a large number of German scientific, literary, artistic, and other associations are founded, most of which have ostensibly no connection with the Pan-Germanic League, but serve, nevertheless, as invaluable auxiliaries for the propagation of its political principles. The "associates" of the League promise to do all in their power to promote German influence in trade, education, and literature, and to assist in popularising the idea of union with Germany among their compatriots, while "active members," who are carefully selected, pledge themselves, in addition, to obey implicitly the instructions they receive from headquarters through their centre. In 1896 the total membership amounted to less than ten thousand, but it is now not less than a quarter of a million, exclusive of the members of the numerous and widely spread affiliated societies. The League has over two hundred centres, of which eighty-five are situated in various parts of the Austro-Hungarian dominions. It controls a large section of the Austro-Hungarian Press, and counts about twenty Austrian Deputies among its most devoted adherents. The League has latterly been reorganised in several directions, and its influence has been increased by the mutual assistance that its commercial members resident abroad pledge themselves to give for the extension of German trade. German members or associates, settling as clerks or employees in Austria-Hungary, or in any of the

countries mentioned above, are promised assistance from other members resident in the district, and are invited to apply to the nearest centre, to which their names are transmitted, should they require advice or aid of any kind.

The Pan-Slavist movement in Austria-Hungary is far less completely organised. I have already explained the vast difficulty it has to encounter in the mutual jealousies and rivalries of the minor Slavonic peoples; nor can it now rely upon an amount of pecuniary assistance from Russia in any way comparable to that given by Germany to the Pan-Germanic movement in Austria. Russian statesmen have, indeed, come to realise that, even if a political union of all the Slavonic races could be brought about, it is by no means certain that it would take a form that the autocratic system of government in Russia would be able to control. Pan-Slavism in Austria-Hungary is mainly a defensive movement against Germanic aggression, and in this sense it meets with widespread sympathy in Russia. In Austria-Hungary, however, it is certain that only a small fraction of the Slavonic peoples would consent to place themselves under Russian rule, unless, indeed, as a last resort to escape annexation by Germany. The Germans, however, are not the only opponents of a union of all the Slavonic races in Austria. Such a consummation, were it possible, would be almost as ruinous to the aspirations of the Magyars as to those of the Germans; and

thus, notwithstanding their mutual antipathies, both races are equally opposed to the strengthening of the Slavonic nationalities, or even to the elevation of Bohemia and Moravia into a kingdom, with a constitution like that of Hungary. The real aspirations of Pan-Slavism are perhaps best expressed in a speech delivered at Moscow in 1901 by M. Tscherop Spiridonowitch, on the occasion of his election to the presidency of the Slavonic Society in the old Russian capital:

Our object is to achieve the unity of the many millions of Slavs in the spheres of intellect and culture, but without any attempt to unite them under one government, or within one single Church. To solve this great and complicated problem, the aspiration for union must take possession of all Slavonic races like a living wave. One of the dialects of the many Slavonic languages must be accepted by all as the medium of intercommunication. . . . The young generation does not yet realise that the twentieth century will undoubtedly belong to the Slavs, and that in this century the secular feud between the Slavs and Pan-Germanism will be fought out. The Slavs understand, however, that they are menaced by the Germanic inundation, which, starting from Hamburg, makes for Posen and Prague, and believes itself destined to reach the Persian Gulf by way of Vienna and Belgrade, Sofia and Constantinople. . . . It is therefore one of the tasks of the Slavonic Society to foster the spread of the Russian language, and aid the struggle against all opponents of the Slavonic idea.

The Pan-Slavonic movement in Austria, like the Pan-Germanic, is aided by a large number of associations and societies of various kinds, most

of which are intended to improve the intellectual and educational condition of the Slavonic peoples. The language question is once again the great difficulty. The Russian Pan-Slavists, like M. Spiridonowitch, are naturally anxious that Russian should be the universal Slavonic tongue; but other races, and especially the Poles and Czechs, are no less devoted to their own. At this moment the Czechs, as the most enterprising and progressive of the Austro-Hungarian Slavs, hold the foremost place among them, and are making every effort for the spread of their own language among kindred races in the Dual Monarchy. The most important of their associations for this object are the so-called *Sokol* societies of the Czechish students, which correspond in some respects to the *Burschenschaften*, the associations of Germanic students which played so large a part in the beginning of the nineteenth century in developing the idea of the Germanic national unity. The name is derived from the Slavonic word for the falcon—the emblem among all Slavonic races of courage, determination, and wide range of thought or action. The meetings, generally at Prague, of the representatives of the *Sokol* associations are always enthusiastically supported by the Czechish people, and one such assembly which took place in July, 1901, produced an immense sensation throughout Germanic Austria. The meeting was attended by influential deputations from France and Russia, and the speeches

delivered by the Czechs clearly indicated their extreme repugnance to the position occupied by Austria-Hungary as an ally of Germany in the Triple Alliance. Among the Russian guests, who were enthusiastically received by the immense crowds in Prague, was General Rittich, Professor of Tactics at the Military Academy of St. Petersburg. The presence of a Russian official of his rank at such a meeting raised indignant protests from the Germanic Austrians, which were greatly increased by a letter from him to the members of the *Sokol*, published the day after his departure by the *Narodni Listy*, the leading Czech organ in Bohemia, in which he said:

I came from the far Slav East, from the slumbering forests of the icy North, and from the boundless steppes of the Black Sea region, to give you proof of our love, and to tell you that you may rely upon the power of Russia. There you Czechs will find everything that you seek or hope for. It is not only enormous material resources which you will find in Russia, but the moral force which feels for the weak, and is ever ready to succour them. Until you have learned to know Russia, you will not realise the source of Slavonic strength. "In this sign thou shalt conquer." I devoutly pray that God may complete the regeneration of the Czech people, enlighten your intelligence, promote your culture, and increase your well-being; that prosperity and vastly increased wealth will come to you through an extension of your commercial relations from the Adriatic Sea to the Pacific Ocean. Amen I say to you. Believe in the God of Russia, and place your trust in Him.

Stripped of the Oriental exaggeration of expression, in which Slavs of every race constantly indulge, this curious appeal really meant nothing more than an encouragement to the Czechs to maintain their resistance against the spread of Germanic power and influence to the East through Bohemia, and an invitation to seek improved commercial relations between Austria-Hungary and Russia. The development of the enormous natural wealth of the Dual Monarchy and the extension of her commerce and industries are, indeed, amongst the most important factors in the life of the Austro-Hungarian people of all classes of society.





CHAPTER XII

THE INDUSTRIAL CLASSES

FEW European countries are more richly and more variously endowed with natural resources than Austria-Hungary. While no less than 93.5 per cent. of the land in Austria and 83.11 in Hungary is officially estimated as "productive," the mineral wealth of both countries is practically inexhaustible. Indeed, like that of the Russian Empire, it comprises almost every product employed in manufactures or industry from gold to coal. In one respect, however, Austria-Hungary is far more favourably situated than Russia. The immense mineral deposits of the latter lie mainly upon the extreme confines of Europe, or in the heart of her Asiatic dominions. In Austria-Hungary, on the contrary, mineral products of some kind are to be found in more than three fourths of the whole territory, and some of the most valuable, those of Bohemia, for example, are within easy access of all the enterprise and energy of Western Europe. Gold is obtained in workable quantities in districts as widely apart as the Tyrol and Transylvania, and

in the latter province, besides the rich deposits of Zalathna, it occurs in many mountain streams, where for centuries it has been regularly worked with primitive instruments by wandering bands of Gipsies, to whom special concessions have been granted by the Government. Silver is even more widely distributed, and a larger amount is obtained in Austria-Hungary than in any other European country except Russia. Copper is found in immense quantities, especially at Schmöl-nitz. The lead mines in Carinthia are among the richest in the world. The quicksilver mines of Carniola are only surpassed in Europe by those of Spain. Tin is found in Bohemia, and zinc in many provinces, while antimony, manganese, nickel, arsenic, uranium, chromium, and wolfram are also profitably worked. Far more important are the immense and practically inexhaustible deposits of coal and iron, and the salt mines, which are among the richest in the world, while in the number and variety of her mineral springs Austria-Hungary is unrivalled in Europe. These alone represent an important source of wealth, both from the immense number of visitors they attract during the season and also on account of the large export trade in the waters sent to all parts of the world.

A complete list of all the valuable mineral products that are obtainable in the Dual Monarchy, from petroleum to porcelain clay, and asphalt to alabaster, would be a formidable one, but

this brief enumeration will suffice to show that, in the immense variety and almost inexhaustible store of raw material, Austria-Hungary possesses one of the most important factors for industrial development. Another might be found in the numberless waterfalls, by which any amount of electric power can be developed for manufacturing purposes. Thus richly endowed by nature, and situated on the high-road between the most progressive nations of Western Europe and the vast markets of the East, Austria-Hungary seems to be provided with all that is needed to ensure for her a prosperous future, if only her strangely varied peoples can bring themselves to forget their hereditary prejudices and work together for the common good.

There is yet another factor that contributes in some respects to the development of Austro-Hungarian industries, although it is one that has also very serious drawbacks. Nowhere else in Europe, except, perhaps, in Russia and some parts of Italy, is labour so cheap. Extremely low wages, however, are not always indispensable to secure the success of manufacturing industries, as is proved by the condition of those in the United States. A very large class of manufacturers unquestionably derive increased profits from the saving they can effect in this direction; but, nevertheless, the extreme poverty of a large proportion of the Austro-Hungarian working classes in towns is becoming a very serious social and

political danger. With extremely low wages, the purchasing power of the nation is reduced to a minimum, and manufacturers, thus deprived of a home market for their produce, are compelled to rely more and more upon their export trade with foreign countries. This, however, becomes increasingly difficult when the poverty of the bulk of the nation precludes the purchase, in return, of the products of those countries to which their own manufactures are sent. It is mainly this unfortunate economic condition of Austria-Hungary that has made Vienna the centre of an international movement that has attracted a good deal of attention of late, the object of which is to induce the chief manufacturing countries on the Continent to establish a kind of "Protectionist Customs Union" to combat the growing competition of the United States.

I have already mentioned the distress existing in Vienna, but the same would be found in almost every manufacturing district throughout the Dual Monarchy. An exhaustive Government inquiry into this question, which has just concluded its investigations, reveals the very unsatisfactory condition of the working classes. In the case of industries dependent upon more or less highly skilled labour, the rate of wages is found to be fairly satisfactory, though below the average obtaining in most manufacturing countries in Western Europe. In almost all the others the earnings are extremely low, and in a large

number of trades, such as boot and shoe making, tailoring, and many branches of the textile industries, they average, over wide districts, not more than eight or ten shillings a week. In very many instances they are far less. In nearly all cases the earnings of women are from twenty to twenty-five per cent. less than those of the men. The low rate of wages and the great distress among the workers in towns are attributed to the immense and ever-growing emigration from the rural to the urban districts, where the supply of labour is now greatly in excess of the demand, and also to the unfair system upon which a very large number of industries are carried on. For example, in such trades as shoemaking, tailoring, leather-work, several branches of cabinet-making, and the manufacture of toys, musical instruments, and an immense number of the small objects in metal, wood, leather, bone, ivory, and cardboard, for which Austria is celebrated, the work passes through the hands of a series of "middlemen," whose profits absorb from twenty to fifty per cent. of what would, even otherwise, have been but a very moderate remuneration for the actual producers. In the case of a large number of Jewish firms, an exceedingly ingenious device is frequently adopted for the reduction of the rate of wages. This consists of the payment to the foreman by the employees of a certain percentage of their weekly or monthly earnings, as a "commission" for the service he is supposed to have

rendered them in finding work for them to do. The wages are paid by the masters in full, and the whole transaction is represented as a merely private matter between the foreman and the men, and one that in no way concerns the firm. In reality, however, the foreman is compelled to hand over to his employers the whole of the commissions that he has received, these amounting sometimes to twenty per cent. of the wages. There is thus no indication in the books of the firm that less than the current rate of wages has been paid by them, and that the profits are consequently larger than the accounts represent. There is, of course, "no compulsion" upon the men to pay this commission. It is simply a "gift" on their part; but were any employee to refuse, his services would very speedily be dispensed with.

The overcrowding of the urban districts is assuredly not due to the attractions of town life, but almost entirely to the depression in agriculture in late years. According to the most recent statistics, for 1902, fully one half of the total population is dependent upon agriculture or forestry, while more than three fourths derive at least a part of their income, directly or indirectly, from the produce of the soil. The position of Austria-Hungary in this respect recalls that of Russia, as in both countries agricultural depression is bringing about a complete change in the economic condition of the people. In both a

remedy is sought in the same direction, and in Austria-Hungary, as well as in Russia, capital and the surplus population are rapidly flowing into the towns in search of a more profitable occupation in industrial enterprise. The majority of these immigrants into the urban districts, and especially the poorest class, belong to one or other of the Slavonic races whose acquaintance we have already made in their own homes in previous chapters—Poles, Ruthenians, and Slovaks.

The way in which the economic conditions in town and country react upon one another is very strikingly shown in the most recent reports of the state of affairs in Galicia. The distress in this province has been very severe for some years past, and has led to frequent disturbances, some of which have of late assumed serious dimensions. In Galicia, as in many other parts of Austria-Hungary, the peasants who undertake the farm labour on the nobles' estates receive no payment in money, but are remunerated by a fixed share of the proceeds of the harvest at the end of the year. The system has its advantages, as it is to the interests of all concerned that the land should be well cultivated and the harvest as productive as possible. Rarely, indeed, is it so complete a failure that the peasants' share, if fairly calculated, is insufficient to supply them with food. This share in Russia is usually from one half to one fourth, rarely, even on the richest land, falling below the latter proportion. In Galicia, how-

ever, the case is widely different. A large number of the estates are now the property of Jewish landowners, and a still larger proportion, though nominally owned by Polish nobles, are mortgaged to their full value, and completely controlled by Jewish money-lenders. As the sole employers of labour in many large districts, these new landowners have no difficulty in combining so as to reduce the peasants' share of the produce of the soil to the lowest possible point, and in 1902 the maximum amount fixed by these landowners' "rings" was one twelfth of the harvest. Such a proportion, divided among the large number of labourers required to cultivate the land upon the somewhat primitive systems adopted in Austria, meant practically starvation for the men and their families, and riots of a serious character have been the result. In many cases the country residences of Jewish landowners have been attacked and burned, and in more than one instance, the owners narrowly escaped death at the hands of their starving peasant labourers.

It is the prevalence of conditions such as these that has led to the very large increase in the number of immigrants into the manufacturing towns and mining districts. The lot of the Slavonic agricultural peasantry is, however, now generally but little improved by their emigration in search of industrial employment. The supply of unskilled labour is far in excess of the demand, such demand coming usually from

Jewish or German employers. The racial animosities are thus once more perpetuated in an aggravated form among the new settlers in the towns and mining districts, and a fresh crop of social troubles is sown, which it will be the fate of future Austro-Hungarian statesmen to reap. It is certainly in no way surprising that emigration from Austria-Hungary, especially of unskilled labourers, has largely increased of late years. The Austrian official statistics upon this subject are somewhat contradictory, but those published by the United States show that the total number of emigrants from Austria-Hungary is now nearly 150,000 per annum. These figures have, indirectly, a very significant bearing upon a question of considerable importance to Great Britain. A large proportion of the emigrants from Austria, and especially the poorer class of Jews, are in a physical condition that would assuredly entail their rejection should they attempt to land at New York. In fact, the German liners now refuse to convey any such emigrants to America, in order to avoid the expense of bringing them back if rejected. England, indeed, is the only country in which the authorities appear to have neither power nor desire to refuse admission to foreigners whose presence is undesirable; and the natural result is a sifting process, by which the able-bodied emigrants go to the United States and elsewhere, while the scum of Europe, Jew and Gentile alike, are left stranded upon England's shores.

The most prosperous nationalities among the industrial classes are the Germans, Czechs, and Magyars, and the more highly paid skilled workers belong to the first two. Among the employers of labour the foremost place is held by Jews and Germans. In describing the Austro-Germanic peasantry, I have already mentioned their aptitude for commercial and industrial pursuits, and among the now somewhat numerous class of men who have risen from the position of workmen to be employers of labour the great majority are of Germanic race. The progress in manufactures that Austria-Hungary has made during the last half-century is unquestionably due to the Teutonic nationality, and, indeed, the whole industrial system in the Dual Monarchy is evidently of German origin. Most of the schools for trades and manufactures, already alluded to, were first founded in the Germanic provinces, though other nationalities, and more especially the Czechs, have since become deeply interested in technical instruction. As an example, I may mention the technical school at Turnau. Here a complete course of practical instruction is given in almost every branch of the application of science to art and industry. It is doubtful whether equally comprehensive tuition could be obtained in any institution of the kind in England, and yet in the Turnau school, in a distant town in Bohemia, and only one of many in different parts of the country, it is given absolutely gratuitously,

while financial help—only a few shillings a month suffices for these hardy Bohemians—is granted to those who have shown exceptional capacity, but who have not the means of continuing their studies without such aid. The expense of maintaining the institution is shared between the town and the State.

The part played by the Jews has been mainly that of capitalists, by whom the necessary financial sinews of war have been provided, and the general business and commercial side of industrial life has been carried on. The scientific development of new industries, or the adaptation of new means of production, has been more frequently the province of the technically trained Germans, while the subordinate part of the actual workers has hitherto been performed by the less advanced Slavonic races.

The industrial system of a country inhabited by such varied races as Austria-Hungary is extremely interesting, and it is probable that, given a generation or two of peace and internal tranquillity, Austria-Hungary may develop an economic system of her own differing widely, in several respects, from that of Western Europe at the present day. This is indicated by the steadily growing influence of the Slavonic races, which form so large a proportion of the population. For all the Slavs the principle of co-operation has a peculiar fascination that almost inevitably attracts them towards one or other of the many pos-

sible forms of Socialism. The Slavonic ideal in Austria, as well as in Russia, has always tended in the direction of groups of small manufacturers co-operating with one another, rather than vast industrial concerns in the hands of a single owner, or controlled on behalf of a company by irresponsible autocratic managers. The typical Slav has an intense dislike—I might almost say an instinctive dread—of the great capitalist, and it is especially this feature in his character that renders friendly relations between Slavonic workmen and Jewish capitalists nearly impossible. The ideals of the two races are the direct antithesis of one another.

The Austro-Hungarian commercial and industrial system of the present day is to a great extent a survival of that which existed in many other countries in the Middle Ages. Like so much else in the Dual Monarchy, it underwent a thorough reform after the political storms of 1866 had passed away; but to explain the attitude of the Slavonic nationalities in their vigorous opposition to reforms which would have entirely abolished the ancient Trade Corporations, that were the most striking feature of the old system, I must briefly refer to the power these bodies previously possessed in Austria-Hungary. The statutes of the industrial corporations varied somewhat in different towns and according to the nature of the trade they represented, but the general principle upon which they were based was the same

in all. The three classes of apprentice, journeyman, and master were strictly maintained, and no man was permitted to exercise the privileges of the master's rank until he had passed through the two inferior grades. The apprentice enjoyed all the rights and privileges of a member of his master's family, including aid and support in case of sickness or accident. But his family rights did not terminate with his apprenticeship. He was still considered a member of the family when, as a journeyman, he commenced the tour through Austria, which was almost compulsory. Here, again, his movements were strictly controlled by the rules of his corporation. An itinerary was drawn up which he was obliged to follow, visiting certain towns, and spending a fixed time in each. In these towns hostelries were maintained by the corporations, at which the journeyman was bound to stay, and, in case of need, means of supporting himself were advanced to him until work had been found for him by the hotel-keeper, who was an agent of the corporation. This professional tour completed, the journeyman, returning to his native town, was eligible to aspire to the highest rank, the mastership. But even when that rank was acquired he was far from being free to carry on his trade without further interference. It was one of the fundamental principles of the corporative system that the strictest equality should be maintained among the members of the corporation, so that no master should acquire more than

his fair share of the trade. A tariff of prices was drawn up, and no manufactured articles might be sold for less or more, while the quality of the goods manufactured was controlled by the Council of Elders. Only a certain number of apprentices and workmen might be employed by one master, and the maximum number of the hours of labour was strictly limited. Absolute obedience to these rules was enforced by a council elected by the corporation, which had the power of inflicting punishment by fine, imprisonment, or expulsion for any contravention of the rules.

The compulsory State insurance scheme of our own day had also its counterpart in the right possessed by every journeyman to claim support or pecuniary aid from the corporation in case of sickness or accident, the fund from which these payments were drawn being mainly supported by fixed contributions from the masters, supplemented by the entrance fees paid by apprentices and journeymen and the fines inflicted for contravention of the rules.

By the regulations introduced in 1859 all merchants, tradesmen, and manufacturers, without exception, were compelled to enter the nearest corporation in their district to which their trade or industry belonged; and the same rule applied to working men. All disputes between masters and employees were to be decided by the Directing Committee of the corporation, with delegates elected by the men. The corporation was also

bound to keep a list of all its working-class members, and endeavour to find suitable occupation for them, besides raising funds, as a friendly society, for the assistance, in case of need, of both masters and workmen. The employment of children under ten was forbidden; until thirteen years of age they were not allowed to work more than ten hours a day, nor be engaged in night work until over fourteen. Another law, passed in 1867, has had very far-reaching results, both from a social and an economic point of view. Full industrial and civil rights were granted to the Jews, with permission to establish themselves in whatever part of the Empire they pleased. In the same year industrial tribunals were founded upon the same system as the French *Conseils des Prudhommes*. In the subsequent legislation, there has been a decided tendency to increase the power of the administration in controlling the industrial affairs of the country. This has been due in no small measure to the influence of the Slavonic races, the warmest supporters of the ancient system of corporations. According to the new regulations, no trade or industry can be established in Austria-Hungary until a declaration has been lodged with the authorities, and a special authorisation is required when machinery is employed. This authorisation can be withdrawn at any time, should any illegal act be committed. The maximum length of the day's labour for adults is fixed at eleven hours, and only on three days in each

month are workmen permitted to exceed that amount, unless temporary permission is obtained from the provincial authorities.

In yet another point the industrial legislation of Austria-Hungary has reverted to the ideas of the Middle Ages. In both countries small industries are very numerous, more especially among the Slavonic races. By the law of March 15, 1883, all workmen and small employers of labour must belong to the local corporation of their respective trades. Such of the old corporations as have survived their long and troubled history have now been reorganised, and new ones are formed to meet the requirements of new districts. Whenever a group of trades of a similar character spring up in any locality, they become in law, by that fact alone, a "corporation," and are subject to the corporation laws. As now constituted, the corporation is governed by a general assembly, consisting of the masters personally and delegates from the men, not more than six nor less than two in number. This assembly elects its president, and also a directing body, which can impose fines upon either the men or the masters for any breach of the rules. All the men and masters belonging to the corporation form a second general assembly, which is bound to elect a committee, of which the delegates of the men form two thirds, and those of the masters one third, to administer the sick fund which each corporation is obliged to maintain. To this fund masters and men both

contribute, in the proportion of one third for the masters and two thirds for the men. The contributions of the latter, however, may in no case exceed three per cent. of the wages. Another useful function of the old corporations is restored by the law of 1883 in the arbitration courts which they are empowered to form for the settlement of disputes between employers and employed. The courts must consist of equal numbers of both classes. With the view of aiding the development of small industries, the corporation may also establish a credit fund for the benefit of its members, purchase machinery, and generally take such measures as it may think right for the mutual advantage of the society. From this it follows that a corporation of small manufacturers may easily develop into a co-operative association, and this law was passed in 1880 with a special view of facilitating this transformation.

Following the example of Germany, Austria founded a system of compulsory insurance against accidents in 1887. In its general features it closely resembles the German system, with, however, several important modifications. In Austria all workmen engaged in any manufacture or industry, with the exception of railways, are bound to be insured against accidents. Unlike the German system, however, this compulsory insurance is not applicable to the workmen engaged by small employers of labour, except when any machinery of a possibly dangerous kind is

used. The present system imposes ninety per cent. of the expense of this insurance upon the master, the remaining ten per cent. being provided by the workmen's contributions. The master is, however, by this payment relieved from all further responsibility except when the accident is due to some fault on his part, when he is bound to refund to the insurance authorities the amount of compensation that the victim has received. He is, moreover, liable, when his fault has thus been proved, to be prosecuted by the injured workman, or by his family when the accident is fatal, and forced to pay the compensation that would have been due under the ordinary law, less that which has already been paid from the insurance fund. The masters' share of this insurance premium seems rather excessive, but the burden is diminished by the arrangement which permits the amount required for the support of the injured workman to be drawn for the first four weeks from the sickness fund, to which, as we have seen, the men's contribution is double that of the masters. It is, therefore, mainly from the sickness fund that the more frequent class of accidents draws compensation. When an accident happens, the employer is bound to give notice of the fact to the insurance authorities within five days, when an inquiry is at once made as to its cause and the amount of the injured man's wages. In non-fatal cases the relief given by the accident insurance fund commences at the end of the fourth

week, when that paid out of the sickness fund terminates, and it is given as long as the workman remains incapacitated. The amount of this compensation is calculated upon the average annual wages, counting three hundred working days to the year. Should the amount so obtained exceed £60, no account is taken of the excess. Of this total the injured man receives sixty per cent. when totally incapacitated from work, and a smaller percentage in the case of partial incapacity. In case of the workman's death, the widow receives twenty per cent. for life, or until her remarriage, and each child fifteen per cent. until the fifteenth year, orphans, however, receiving twenty per cent. each. Twenty per cent. is also given to parents and grandparents, when the deceased was their sole support, but in no case can the total of these grants exceed £30 per annum.

In 1898 the Imperial and Royal Department of Labour Statistics was founded, and attached to the Ministry of Commerce. Its duties consist in collecting information, with a view to legislation, on all matters connected with the relations of labour and capital. It has a permanent council of thirty-two members, of whom eight represent the interests of the employers and an equal number those of the men. Though not possessed of any compulsory powers, it has played a very useful part in a large number of difficult labour questions during the last few years. The vast amount

of information at its disposal, and the presence of eight working-class members upon its committee, greatly increase its influence, and have enabled it to do good service in smoothing away difficulties and effecting compromises between seemingly irreconcilable factions.

Besides the provision made for the assistance of the working classes in case of sickness or accident, a large number of charitable institutions of various kinds endeavour to grapple with the evils of pauperism. These are far too numerous for a detailed description to be possible here. A large class consists of private charities, while others are supported more or less completely by the provincial governments, and very many belong to religious bodies. Funds for the support of the provincial State charities are derived from a great variety of sources. In some provinces a tax is imposed upon all legacies exceeding a certain amount, but a larger sum is obtained by levying a fixed contribution upon all tickets sold for entertainments of any kind, and also upon shooting and hunting licences.

Attempts have been made recently in several of the Austrian provinces, as well as in Hungary, to reorganise the whole system of charity relief upon a fixed plan, so as to avoid the difficulty that often results from several charities overlapping in their sphere of operations. A recent investigation showed that in many districts where widely spread distress prevailed a large number

of nominal "paupers" were living in comparative affluence upon the doles they received from different charities, which had no means of discovering that they were all contributing to the maintenance of the same individuals. There are also many charities, some possessed of considerable means, which were founded long ago, to give assistance of a kind for which the need no longer exists. Such, for instance, are many of the wealthy Servian charities, to which I have already alluded, situated in several parts of Hungary where the Servian colonies, for whose benefit they were founded, have now entirely disappeared.

In several of the provinces, especially those in which the Slavonic element prevails, the old custom still exists of quartering the aged and infirm poor upon the richest householders, who are bound to supply them with board and lodging. This mode of providing for the poor by no means excites the opposition that might be expected. In Austria-Hungary, as in Russia, a refusal to aid distress or poverty, and, above all, to give food when asked for "in the name of Christ," would be considered disgraceful, especially among the lower classes in towns and the peasantry. No doubt this national custom of indiscriminate almsgiving leads to many abuses, but nevertheless it springs from one of the most pleasing features in the character of the Austro-Hungarians, whose actions, in almost everything, are governed more by the heart than by the head.

In many towns, particularly in Hungary, beggars form themselves into a regularly organised association, which is frankly recognised by the authorities, and they elect their own chief, who arranges the districts they are to visit on certain specified days. This system is at least better than altogether indiscriminate almsgiving, as the "recognised" beggars are known personally both to the police and to the group of householders who contribute for years to the support of the same individuals. Whenever an interloper attempts to beg on any of their regular "preserves," they at once denounce him to the police as a vagrant, and, unless he can prove that his poverty really entitles him to be ranked among the recognised mendicants, he is punished accordingly, and, if a stranger, is expelled from the town. In several provinces, on the other hand, mendicancy is prohibited by law; but there is at least one day in the year when this prohibition is never enforced. All Saints' Day is the beggars' great festival, although this particular aspect of it is in no way associated with the ecclesiastical rites or observances of the Roman Catholic, the Orthodox, or the Protestant Church. In the country districts especially, preparations for the coming festival are made for several days beforehand, and great is the dismay if, as sometimes happens, the remoteness of the farm and a spell of bad weather should so diminish the number of applicants that some of the store prepared for them is

left on the hands of the would-be donor. In Bohemia and Upper and Lower Austria it is believed that this portends coming disaster to the peasant and his family. It is essential, in their belief, that the alms should be given personally to the applicant. There would be no virtue in giving them even to the priest for the Church to distribute. The beggar on that day is regarded as a guest, and in many districts he is invited into the chief room, where the table is loaded with good things, and he is seated in the place of honour.

The custom of distributing alms on All Saints' Day is naturally one that is more general in the country, the mining districts, and the smaller towns than in the great manufacturing centres; but even there it is still followed by the working classes, a large proportion of whom, as we have seen, are of recent peasant origin. This mutual helpfulness among the lower classes, and especially among those of Slavonic origin, plays no small part in the rapid growth of Socialistic aspirations in Austria. Socialism there differs widely from what it is in Western Europe, and above all in France and Belgium. The Austrian peasant, who would feel for ever disgraced were he to refuse a meal from his own scanty store when demanded by a wayfarer "in the name of Christ," or an artisan, who is bound by all the traditions of his class to help a fellow-workman in distress, considers that, as the Emperor Francis Joseph once remarked, "Sorrow and suffering have their

privileges as well as rank." In his belief, he has no moral right to refuse to give any help he can to alleviate the sufferings of others, and on the whole he acts up to his principles. Socialism, therefore, appeals to him as the expression of an ideal that he has himself always felt bound to act upon. As a rule he has no hatred or jealousy of the millionaire, like that of the Italian or Belgian anarchist, solely because the richer classes can enjoy a life of ease and pleasure from which he himself is for ever debarred; but he nevertheless supports an economic system which would speedily reduce the millionaire to his own condition. The nature of the new social and economic difficulties that would arise, were his theories carried out, is an abstruse question that is altogether beyond his comprehension. He can only realise the crude fact that while suffering and distress largely prevail among men and women of his own class, a small section of society possesses wealth that would suffice to relieve at least a part of the sufferers.





CHAPTER XIII

INTELLECTUAL AND RELIGIOUS LIFE

THE religious and intellectual life of the Austro-Hungarian peoples is no less exceptional, in many of its features, than their economic and political existence. In most countries in the world a common language and a common religion are among the factors that contribute most favourably to national unity in thought and character. The Austro-Hungarian races have never enjoyed this advantage. Intellectual development for them has only been possible through the medium of many widely different languages, while the various religions they profess are so closely associated with the maintenance of the racial distinctions which they have so much at heart that they are far more an element of disruption than of union.

Roman Catholicism has, of course, always been the dominating religious factor in the national life, and its adherents embrace about two thirds of the total population of the Dual Monarchy. Notwithstanding the profession of one single faith by so large a proportion of the people, Roman

Catholicism is, nevertheless, powerless to bridge over the divisions caused by national jealousies between different races. The Czechs and Germanic Austrians, for example, are both Roman Catholic peoples, but that fact in no way diminishes their hostility to one another. Indeed, the mutual antipathy of the Czechs and the Germans is even more intense than that existing between any other races in Austria-Hungary. But while Roman Catholicism has altogether failed as a bond of union between different nationalities, it has actually led to the breaking up of single races into yet smaller fragments. Similarity of language, customs, and character might, for example, have led the Southern Slavs to unite as one people among themselves, if not with their more distant kinsfolk in the North, the Ruthenians, Poles, Slovaks, and Czechs. Part of these Southern Slavs, however, as I have already explained in a previous chapter, have been induced to enter the Roman Catholic Church, and this fact alone has created an irreconcilable breach between them and those of their race who remained faithful to Orthodoxy, while in no way uniting them to their Germanic neighbours and co-religionists. Allegiance to the *Pravoslavie*—the “True Religion”—is regarded by all “true Slavs” of the Southern branch as the most indispensable sign of nationality. Devotion to their Church alone gave the unity of national feeling that enabled their Russian co-religionists to resist the aggression both

of the Moslems and of the Germanic Roman Catholics in the past. The acceptance of Roman Catholicism by a Slavonic race is consequently, in their eyes, an act of unpardonable treason. It would, nevertheless, be a great mistake to suppose that these disputes are due to religious fanaticism, properly so called. The *Pravoslav* Serb, for example, does not hate the Roman Catholic Austrians or the Protestant Magyars on account of their religions, but solely because their races are more powerful and influential than his own. Their religious beliefs are altogether indifferent to him. Though more than half the difficulties that Austria has had to face since the Reformation have been due to religious conflicts, it is doubtful if differences of dogma have really played any great part in them, especially since the end of the Thirty Years' War. For the Austro-Hungarian of every race, except, perhaps, the Saxons of Transylvania, theological questions have, as a rule, but little attraction, and few, even among the educated classes, can understand the cast of mind which has led to the creation of so many sects and shades of theological beliefs among laymen in Anglo-Saxon countries. The great majority of the Austro-Hungarians of the present day are quite content to leave all questions of this kind to the ecclesiastical authorities of their own respective churches to settle for them, and absolutely refuse to trouble their heads about the matter. At the same time, the Roman Catholic

Austrian is by no means willing to submit to the dictation of the priests in matters that lie outside the province of the Church. The power of the priests over their flocks in political matters, for example, is infinitely less than it is among Roman Catholics in Ireland or in England. There is, of course, a powerful clerical party in both Austria and Hungary, but even its members, as a rule, are by no means inclined to submit blindly to clerical dictation. They are, it is true, anxious for the maintenance of the prestige of the Church, and even for the extension of its influence among the lower orders of society, as, in their belief, it is one of the most effective means of combating the growth of subversive movements among the working classes and the peasantry. But, nevertheless, almost all the members of the clerical party are equally anxious to keep the Church well in hand, and also themselves to control the influence which they wish it to exercise.

The Church in Roman Catholic Austria-Hungary is, indeed, far more jealously watched and more rigorously controlled by the State than it is in Protestant England. No papal bulls or decretals can be promulgated by the Church until they have received the sanction of the Sovereign, who also nominates the archbishops and bishops. The spiritual authority of the priests is strictly limited by law, and they may be dismissed from their cure by the Civil Government, should they be guilty of disobedience to the constitutional

authorities of the country. All the endowments of the Church, as well as all the convents and monasteries, are also placed under strict State control. The property possessed by the Roman Catholic Church in Austria-Hungary is of enormous value, especially in Vienna. The ecclesiastical establishment known as the Starhembergische Freihaus, for example, contains more than two hundred different dwellings. Others, almost equally large, are the Schottenhof, which derives its name from the Irish (*Scoti*) Benedictines, who were invited here in 1158, the Melkerhof, and especially the great Augustinian monastery at Klosterneuburg, which is the owner of over two thirds of the north-western environs of the capital. All over the Dual Monarchy, estates of nearly equal value are to be found belonging to the Roman Catholic Church. The transference of the control of these endowments to the Civil Government in 1873 excited intense opposition from Rome and the higher ecclesiastics in Austria. The latter were especially disgusted with a new tax, which was imposed at the same time upon their enormous revenues, for the benefit of the poorer class of country parish priests. The Roman Catholic Church, from its connection with the Court, has hitherto been much more aristocratic, so far as its higher dignitaries are concerned, than any other church in the country, and it generally counts a considerable number of great nobles among its prelates. The lower

country priests, however, especially in Hungary, are usually derived from a far inferior social class, and this has naturally tended to place the relations of the bishops with the bulk of their clergy upon a different footing from that existing in the Church of England. This social distinction, however, is gradually diminishing, as a much larger proportion of the high ecclesiastics is now drawn from the lower orders, and an improvement has unquestionably been made of late years in the education of the priests generally.

Closely connected with the Roman Catholic Church is the Church of the "United Greek Catholics," or Uniates, a religious body that occupies a somewhat anomalous position. It was created by means of a curious compromise between the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches which, on the whole, has been by no means to the advantage of the Church of Rome, especially in Austria-Hungary. In return for a full acknowledgment of the supremacy of the Pope, the members of the United Greek Church were permitted to retain rites and doctrines which had previously been condemned as heretical, such as the giving of the cup to the laity in the sacrament, the marriage of priests, the lawfulness of divorce in certain cases, and the use of languages "understood of the people"—Greek, Slavonic, or even Roumanian or Magyar—in place of Latin in the celebration of the Mass. A union of a similar kind was also effected with a section of the Ar-

menians, who in Austria have an archbishop and a few thousand adherents. The Uniates are mostly members of the Ruthenian and Wallach races. About the time of Maria Theresa a considerable number of the Southern Slavs were induced to join the United Greek Church, but nearly all of them reverted to Orthodoxy when the principle of religious toleration was proclaimed by Joseph II.

The compromise represented by the Greek Catholics has not had the result expected by the Roman Catholic Church at the time the arrangement was made. Instead of forming an easy door, by which it was hoped large numbers of the Orthodox would unconsciously be led into complete conformity with the rites of the Roman Church, the Uniates have clung tenaciously to all the ceremonies in their religious services which most closely resemble those of their ancient *Pravoslav* faith. In mixed districts, such as Galicia and Bukowina, in which there are complete ecclesiastical establishments for both the Roman and United Greek Catholic Churches, the special privileges granted to the latter have placed the Roman Catholics in a rather equivocal position. The fact that, in the case of the United Greeks, it permits practices which it long condemned and formerly punished with all the terrors of the Inquisition, lays it open to the charge of inconsistency. The position of the Roman Catholic clergy in those provinces in which there is a

large United Greek population is peculiarly unsatisfactory. For example, though the two Churches are in full communion, while the priests of one branch are almost all married, marriage is absolutely prohibited to those of the other. The immorality of which the Roman Catholic priests in country districts of Austria-Hungary are so often accused is generally attributed to this contradictory state of things. To a large class among them the distinction appears to be both arbitrary and inconsistent, and in consequence very many are led to contract secret unions, which, though unrecognised by the Church, or by any legal formalities, are nevertheless generally considered by them to be as binding morally as any regular marriage could be.

The Protestants are practically confined to the Hungarian dominions, where nearly a quarter of the population belongs to the Calvinistic and Lutheran confessions. In the Austrian provinces they amount to considerably less than two per cent. Like almost everything in Austria-Hungary, the two great divisions of Protestantism closely follow the lines of nationality. The Saxons of Transylvania are nearly all Lutherans, while the great majority of the Magyar Protestants belong to the Calvinistic confession. Among the Magyars, Protestantism is also, to a certain extent, a question of social class. In the early days of the Reformation almost the whole of the nobility embraced Calvinism, and the Magyar

peasants upon their estates accepted the religion of the feudal lords without demur. Later on the majority of the more wealthy nobles were gradually drawn back to the Roman Catholic Church, through the influence of the Court at Vienna, and at first their peasants followed their example once more. In the case of the more recent reconversion of the nobles to Catholicism, however, a large proportion of their peasants declined to change their faith again, and remained Protestants.

The *Táblabirák*, the less wealthy class of nobles, whose family life I described in a former chapter, and who reside constantly upon their estates, were less influenced by Court life, and the majority had, therefore, no temptation to abandon the reformed religion. As a result, the Protestants in Hungary are now most numerous in the classes corresponding to those of the English country squires of moderate fortune, the yeomen of former days, the more prosperous peasantry, and the middle class in towns; in other words, to those sections of society which in England formed the "backbone" of the country in the old Puritan days. In the revolt of 1848 the most resolute supporters of the movement were, like Cromwell's Ironsides, of the Protestant religion, as was also their chief leader, Louis Kossuth. It is, therefore, in no way surprising that, though the Church of a minority of the people, Protestantism is constantly spoken of, even by Roman Catholics

in Hungary, as "the Magyar faith"—"*a Magyar Vallas.*"

Until recent times, the Hungarian Protestant schools, although they received no aid from the Government, were admittedly the best in the country. The Magyar Calvinists supported over four thousand primary schools, and so excellent was the education given that a large proportion of the pupils, often, indeed, the majority, were the children of Roman Catholic parents. Fearing that this might lead to a change in their religion, a special law was passed by the Viennese Government, before the restoration of the Hungarian Constitution in 1867, absolutely forbidding the instruction of Catholic children in these Magyar schools. Notwithstanding this, however, the prohibition was generally disregarded; nor was there any real probability that the children would be tempted to change their creed. In Hungary, and especially among the Magyars, there is now hardly any feeling of jealousy between Protestants and Roman Catholics of the same race. In many cases, indeed, in spite of the law, Roman Catholic priests often arranged with Protestant schoolmasters for the latter to give the necessary religious instruction to their Catholic pupils to prepare them for their first Communion, when, for any reason, it was difficult or inconvenient for the priest to undertake the duty himself.

It is curious to observe how the proportionate numbers of the various religious bodies in Aus-

tria-Hungary have remained almost unchanged for many generations. Proselytism, it is true, especially from the Roman Catholic Church, was long forbidden by law; but though a change of creed now entails no serious difficulty, it is decidedly discouraged by public opinion. Some ulterior motive of personal advantage is always suspected in such cases. In mixed marriages it is often arranged for half the children to be brought up in one religion and the rest in the other. Though special precautions are hardly ever taken, and all are educated in the same way and are subject to identically the same influences, it hardly ever happens that any among them attempts in after life to change the religion that was chosen by the parents. This unquestionably indicates a good deal of what in England would be regarded as religious indifference; but all over the Continent a change of creed is far rarer than it is among Anglo-Saxon races. I was lately assured by a friend who, from his many years' experience of evangelistic work in Austria, is well able to form an opinion, that even the important and widespread anti-Rome movement that has recently attracted so much attention might be regarded as purely political, and would certainly not lead to any appreciable increase in the number of Austrian Protestants.

The Orthodox Church occupies a far more important position in Hungary than it does in Austria, embracing nearly seventeen per cent. of the

Hungarian population and less than three of the Austrian. This proportion is, however, exclusive of the inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina, of whom more than a third belong to the Orthodox faith. Its adherents are generally found among the least advanced of the Austro-Hungarian peoples, especially in the case of those belonging to the Wallachian race. The description I have already given of the Orthodox clergy, and especially of the village popes in *Russian Life*, would apply almost exactly to those in Hungary. In both cases the same ignorance and poverty exist, while among the Wallachs intemperance and immorality are even more prevalent. Though there has been some improvement in their education during the last few years, there are still many Wallach popes who can only with difficulty read the services of their Church, and even in the last census over fifty were described as "able to read, but not to write." It is difficult to believe that, in the case of so large a number, the incapacity was solely due to some physical defect. The Wallach Orthodox popes are, in fact, absolutely unable to exercise any moral influence over their flocks, and to this must be attributed the widespread superstition among the peasantry, which almost amounts to a second "religion," a survival of pre-Christian times. Unfortunately, a large section of their political leaders are by no means favourable to any measures that would improve their moral and intellectual status, fearing that

such improvement would lead to their eventual "Magyarisation" and the loss of their distinctive nationality.

In the districts inhabited by Serbs, on the contrary, a much larger proportion of the country popes have received a fair education, and in towns not a few of the Orthodox clergy are men of refinement and education. The Church is governed by three separate "Conferences," one each for the Serbs and Wallachs, while the third controls ecclesiastical affairs in the province of Bukowina.

The Unitarian Church is mainly that of the Székels, the interesting branch of the Magyars in Transylvania whom I have already described. This sect is far less numerous than it was a century or two ago, and its membership does not now amount to more than fifty or sixty thousand. Its adherents belong mainly to the class of small landowners and the more prosperous peasantry. They are generally well-educated and intelligent, with an excellently organised high school and a college of their own at Kolozsvar.

Notwithstanding the general distaste of the Austro-Hungarians of the present day for theological questions, there are a considerable number of minor sects, especially in the more remote parts of Hungary. Their members are generally of Slavonic or Wallachian race, and nearly all belong to the peasant class. One of these sects I must specially mention, from the great interest attaching to it as a survival of one of the very

earliest religious movements in the direction of Protestantism. The Bogomiles, whose name is derived from the Servo-Bulgarian words *Bog z' milui* ("God have mercy!") were widely spread among both races as early as the ninth century, and at one time their tenets were held by almost the entire Servian population of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and by the great majority in Croatia, Dalmatia, Istria, Carniola, and Slavonia. The religion of the Bogomiles was almost identical with that of the Albigensians, and there is every reason to believe that the revolt against the teaching of both the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches had spread westwards from Bosnia, through Dalmatia, and thence to various parts of Western Europe. Early in the thirteenth century the Albigensian refugees found a safe asylum among their co-religionists in Bosnia, but a few years later the Pope sent imperative orders to the King of Hungary, then the Suzerain of Bosnia, to "wipe out the heretics." The crusade against the Bosnians that followed was not less terrible than that which had ravaged Provence, and lasted, with few intermissions, until 1463, when the country, ruined and exhausted, fell an easy prey to the Turks. Long previously, however, Servian Bogomile missionaries had been teaching their tenets to their Slavonic *confrères* in Bohemia, and had thus helped to prepare the ground for the subsequent Hussite reformation. In Bosnia, however, the terrible oppression of the Turks

effected what the Inquisition had failed to accomplish, though the Church of Rome was in no way a gainer, as the vast majority of the Bosnian Serbs became members of the Eastern Orthodox Church, or were forcibly converted to the Moslem faith. Some few thousands of the Bogomiles continued to exist in small communities, and are still to be found in several parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The survival of this small band of Slavonic Protestants is extremely interesting, not only from their connection with the earliest attempts at a reformation of the Church, but on account of their tenets, which bear a striking analogy to the rigid Puritanism which has always had so strong a fascination for Slavonic religious and social reformers from the earliest days to those of Tolstoi.

A good many of the Austro-Hungarian minor sects, especially among the Wallachs and Ruthenians, closely resemble those formed by the *Raskolniki* in Russia, while others unquestionably represent a survival of theological ideas brought into Hungary by refugees from Bohemia after the final overthrow of the Protestants at the battle of the White Hill. Among these I may mention the Nazarenes, a sect resembling the Bogomiles in several of their tenets, but who, like the English Quakers, have a conscientious objection to serving in the Army. This doctrine, in a country where military service is universal and compulsory, has naturally created considerable difficulty for the authorities. The situation is rendered

more embarrassing for them since the Nazarenes, who never attempt to escape the punishment that their refusal to serve in the Army entails, are among the most law-abiding subjects of the Emperor-King, and their moral character in the ordinary affairs of life is above reproach. Of late years a compromise has been made whenever possible by attaching the Nazarenes to some of the ambulance corps. Another curious sect is that known as the Sabbatarians. It exists chiefly among the Székels, and was founded about 1588. Besides observing the Jewish Sabbath instead of Sunday as a day of rest, they also insist upon obedience to a number of other injunctions of the Mosaic Ceremonial Law. As their sect was not among the "recognised religions" enumerated in the Edict of Toleration granted by Joseph II., a large proportion of them have embraced Judaism, especially during the last twenty years.

One of the many titles of the sovereigns of Austria is "King of Jerusalem." Some years ago the Emperor Francis Joseph is said to have remarked that, from the rapid increase in the Hebrew population of Austria-Hungary, his successors might find it necessary in a few generations to change the title to "King of the Jews." The part played by the Jews in Austria-Hungary recalls yet another of the many analogies that exist between the Dual Monarchy and Russia. In both empires the majority of them are crowded into a relatively small portion of the country; in both

they live almost exclusively in towns, and so far as all but the more prosperous are concerned, in a condition of terrible moral and sanitary degradation. The deplorable state of the Jews in Russia is generally explained as the result of the regulations which prohibit their distribution all over the Empire in search of suitable employment, and forbid their cultivation of the soil, or their settlement in rural districts. In Austria-Hungary no such regulations exist; but nevertheless the Jews crowd into the towns in ever increasing numbers, and persistently refrain from seeking agricultural employment. Even in the case of Jewish immigrants into England we find the same peculiarity maintained. While British farmers would gladly pay far higher wages for ordinary agricultural labour than even a skilled artisan could earn in Russia or Austria, Jewish immigrants into England never seek a livelihood in such occupation, but swarm into certain parts of London and other large towns, where their quarters now closely resemble the Ghettos of Vilna, Lemberg, and Cracow.

Whatever the cause, there is one peculiarity we find reproduced in every country with almost the exactitude of a law of nature. Wherever the Jews have settled in any numbers, their prosperity is in inverse ratio to the proportion they form of the total population. The larger the proportion of the Jews to the Christians in any town or district, the greater is the degree of general poverty prevailing among both the

Jewish and Christian inhabitants. Where, as in many towns in Russia and Austria, the Jews form the majority, the lowest depths of degradation, poverty, and distress are reached. There is not a single spot in Europe in which the Jews have formed a fairly prosperous and self-supporting community, as is done, for example, in so many towns in Austria and Hungary by colonies of other races—Czechs, Saxons, or Germans—in the midst of a population of different, and often hostile, nationality. Whatever the reason may be, wherever in any town there are fewer than ten Christians to every Jew, the conditions of existence for Jew and Christian alike become almost insupportable. In Austria-Hungary, at least, it is not due to any special legislation to the disadvantage of the Jew. I have already alluded to the wealthier class of Austro-Hungarian Jews, especially the great financiers and landed proprietors, and the *rôle* they play in the national life. The relations between them and the less wealthy Jewish traders on the one hand, and the Jewish artisans and working classes on the other, are almost exactly the same in Austrian Poland as they are in Russia. All over Galicia, for example, and in parts of other provinces as well, the system of Jewish urban existence which is found in Russia is reproduced, and in Austria as in Russia almost every branch of commerce and industry is entirely controlled by Jewish “rings.” At the same time it is perfectly true that Jewish

capital and German industrial skill have developed many new manufactures in Austrian and Russian Poland to a degree of importance that they would not probably have attained for years had they been dependent upon Slavonic enterprise alone.

In Austria-Hungary the various religions have always been closely connected with the question of education. I have already mentioned the large number of schools for general education maintained by the Protestant Magyars. In Austria there are forty-eight special theological schools, of which one each belongs to the Protestant, United Greek, and Orthodox Churches, while the remaining forty-five are Roman Catholic. In Hungary there are forty-nine theological colleges representing the various religions professed in the country. During the last thirty years, however, both Austria and Hungary have made considerable progress in all departments of secular education. There are now eight universities in Austria and three in Hungary. The University of Vienna is one of the most important on the Continent, and has a staff of about three hundred professors and nearly four thousand students. The most celebrated departments are those of Oriental languages, natural science, and especially of medicine. The University of Prague is making supreme efforts to recover something of the position it occupied in the fifteenth century, while that of Pesth is striving no less vigorously to win

an honourable place in European learning for the Magyar race. Besides the universities, there are eight technical high schools in the Dual Monarchy, in which the most complete scientific instruction is given in the four departments of engineering, architecture, machinery, and technical chemistry. There is also a celebrated high school of agriculture at Vienna. The whole course of study extends over a period of five years. The middle schools consist of gymnasias, "real" or modern schools, and "real"-gymnasias. In the gymnasium the course of study extends over eight years, but is divided into two sections of equal length, the first being complete in itself for those who are unable to devote a longer period to their education. Besides these, there are also a considerable number of under gymnasias in which the educational course is completed in four years only. While the instruction given in the gymnasias is intended to be a preparation for the university, that of the "real" schools prepares the students for the technical high schools. In their case the course of study extends over seven years, in two divisions of four years for the lower and three for the upper. In the "real"-gymnasias the course of study lasts for eight years, in two divisions of four years each, the last being divided into two sections, one corresponding with the studies at the universities, and the other with the subjects taught in the technical high schools. Popular technical education is now well provided

for by the establishment of no less than 3800 special technical institutes, in which in 1902 nearly a quarter of a million students of all classes of society were receiving instruction in agriculture, or some branch of almost every description of manufacturing industry.

Elementary education is now practically compulsory in nearly all parts of the Dual Monarchy, and its cost is provided by the communes, which are bound to erect schools in all districts in which forty children are living at a greater distance than two miles from one already existing. The number of teachers is so regulated by law that at least one should be provided for every multiple of eighty pupils. Eighty-one or more children would therefore require at least two teachers, one hundred and sixty-one at least three, and so on in proportion.

In educational matters the never-ending difficulty of nationality and language naturally makes itself acutely felt. To give some idea of the complications resulting from it, it is only necessary to say that in Austria alone there were in 1900, 7659 schools in which the German language was employed; Czech was used in 4997, and "various other Slavonic languages" in 5237; in 771 schools the language used was Italian, and in 114 the Roumanian language was employed for the satisfaction of the Wallachs who live in Austrian territory. Even the little group of Magyars, who spread over the border from Hungary into Austria, had to be provided with three elementary

schools in which the sacred principle of nationality is maintained by teaching a few scores of peasant children in the Magyar tongue. It is needless to point out that the polyglot character of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy vastly increased the difficulty that had to be met in developing an efficient system of popular education. Even the compilation and selection of suitable school-books in so many languages is in itself no light task, above all when every word has to be carefully considered, lest some unfortunate phrase might seem to contain a covert slight that would give dire offence to one or other of these susceptible nationalities. In order to unite the primary school teachers in a common desire to promote the educational development of the country as a whole, quite apart from their own particular nationality, the Hungarian Ministry of Education publishes and forwards to each of the masters a newspaper, the *Néptanítók Lapja*. Special editions of this journal are printed for their use in all the principal languages in which instruction is given in the Hungarian primary schools—Magyar, German, Wallachian, Slovak, Ruthenian, Servian, and Croatian—and all educational questions are discussed in a broadly national sense. Notwithstanding this diversity of language, however, the Hungarian Government now insists that Magyar must be taught in all primary schools to children of every nationality. In this respect the policy of Hungary differs widely from that of Austria,

where there is now practically no official or common language at all.

In the domain of literature Austria is placed in an exceptionally unfavourable position. A national literature without a national language is almost impossible. Indeed, the only two languages which can be described as distinctively national are Magyar and Czech, since these are the only two of any importance spoken almost exclusively within the Austro-Hungarian dominions. Austro-Germanic writers, for example, are compelled to enter into a very unequal competition with the far more numerous class of literary men who write in the same language in the Fatherland, while from the strong race feeling now existing, the number of their readers among the non-Germanic nationalities is steadily diminishing. In the case of Polish literature, again, practically no distinction can be made between that produced by Poles of Austrian, Russian, or Prussian political nationality. The same may be said of the less important literature of the Servian and Croatian, Wallach and Ruthenian, or Little Russian races, since their languages are those of the far more numerous and generally more highly developed nations whose territories are outside the Austro-Hungarian dominions. The Austro-Hungarian literature in these languages is naturally more inclined to draw its inspiration from Germany, Russia, Roumania, or Servia, respectively than from purely native sources.

In Austria, as we have seen, these minor languages have now free scope for their development. In Hungary, however, except in Croatia-Slavonia, Magyar is everywhere the official language, and is becoming more and more that of the educated classes generally. Both politically and socially the use of any language except Magyar is distinctly discouraged, and writers belonging to any of the minor nationalities must either write in Magyar or forego all hope of social distinction among the higher and official classes, and content themselves with the smaller and less important group of readers who belong to their own race. But even Magyar cannot yet be regarded as a literary language, although it has already produced a good many writers of exceptional merit. Magyar is still in a transition state, and the language, as spoken and written by the educated classes at the present day, differs as much from that in use only half a century ago as the English of Shakespeare does from that of Chaucer. Until the early part of the eighteenth century, Latin was the only language spoken generally by the higher classes, except by those in more intimate relations with the Court of Vienna, who had latterly adopted German. This habitual use of Latin led to the introduction of a vast number of words from that language into Magyar, while most of the less highly educated Magyars, in attempting to speak Latin, inevitably mixed up with it an enormous proportion of Magyar words

to which they affixed a Latin termination. Indeed, one writer affirms that there was very little difference between the half-Latin "Magyar" spoken by the higher classes, and the half-Magyar "Latin" of the country *Táblabirák* whenever they attempted to express themselves in the aristocratic language, since in both cases it was made up of Magyar and Latin in nearly equal proportions. The mixture was an unfortunate one, for Magyar belongs to the Turanian group, and is not even an Aryan language.

With the rapid growth of Hungarian national aspirations, especially during the last half-century, the "purification" of Magyar became an object of enthusiastic patriotism. Many literary societies were formed, and at length the Hungarian Academy was founded at Pesth. One can form some idea of the wave of patriotic enthusiasm that swept all over the country by the fact that no small part of the large sum required to erect the splendid Palace of the Academy was obtained by contributions from the peasantry, many quite illiterate, and only conscious that something was being done to consolidate their national existence. The Hungarian Academy not only pronounces a semi-official criticism upon all new books published in the Magyar language, but employs a part of its large revenues in making liberal grants to aid the publication of works of merit, and in prizes which are distributed among the most successful authors in various

branches of literary work, especially the drama. Among other societies which have been formed with a similar object is the *Kisfaludy Társaság*, founded in 1836. Like the Academy, it is devoted to the improvement and development of the language, but it also spends large sums in publishing translations of foreign works into Magyar. A large proportion of those selected are by English authors. This study of foreign literature has, however, its drawbacks, as it has created a tendency among modern Magyar writers to imitate more or less the style of those authors whom they take as their models. To English readers acquainted with French, however, a very good idea of the really national poetry of the Magyars is presented by *Ballades et Chansons Populaires de la Hongrie*, translated by Jean de Nethy, and published by Alphonse Lemerre, Paris. It is interesting to note that Magyar, as a branch of Turanian, lies altogether outside the group that comprises the more familiar Latin, Teutonic, and Slavonic languages. In all these the student will find more or less remote family relationships, which will help him on his way; but such analogies are entirely absent from Magyar, except in the case of words absorbed from other languages, and their number is diminishing every day. Magyar more nearly resembles Finnish than any other European tongue, although the Magyars, in their undying hatred for everything associated with Russia, repudiate the connection with

indignation. It is nevertheless interesting to note that Finland alone, among Russian provinces, has ever struggled to preserve her ancient constitution, exactly as Hungary did in her long contest with Austria.

A similar change to that which Magyar is undergoing has occurred in the Wallachian or Roumanian language. The first book in Roumanian appeared in the sixteenth century, and was printed in Old Slavonic characters, which remained in use until about fifty years ago. Since the "nationality fever" has attacked the Roumanians and Wallachs as seriously as it did the other races of Eastern Europe, they have, however, insisted more and more upon their ancient Roman origin. The Old Slavonic characters were abandoned for those in use in Western Europe, and every effort has since been made to efface all appearance of any relationship with Slavonic tribes. The Roumanians, indeed, are now as eager to introduce Latin words into their language as the Magyars are to expel them from theirs. This, however, is no easy task, for nearly a third of Wallachian consists of Slavonic elements, which, by centuries of use, have become completely assimilated, and the Latin or Italian words with which modern writers attempt to supply their place often seem even more alien to the present genius of the language. Modern Roumanian, however, though, like Magyar, still distinctly a new creation, has unquestionably a future

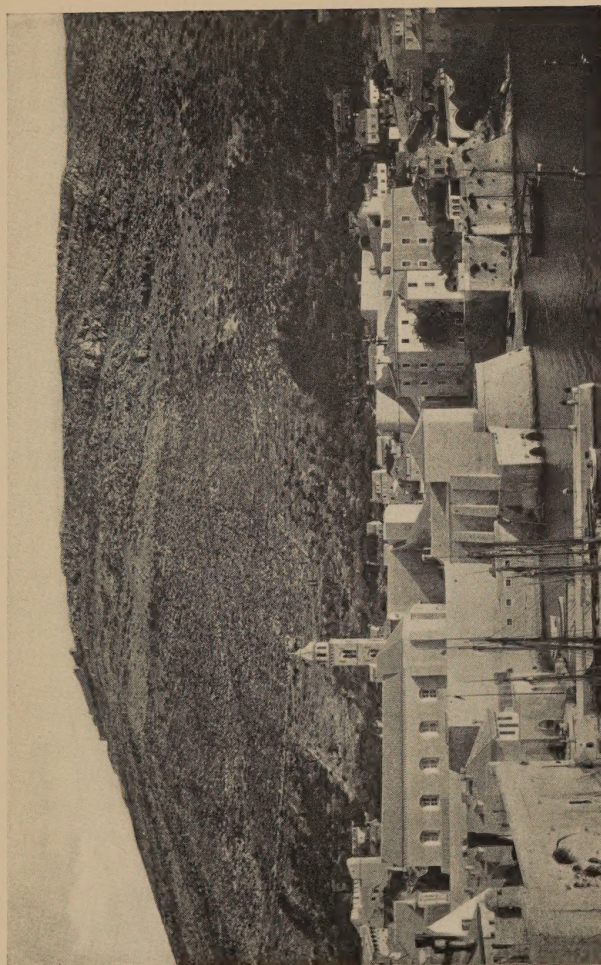
before it, and already contains a large amount of very promising literary work, to which Carmen Sylva, the present Queen, has made many valuable contributions. Akin to Roumanian or Wallachian is the Italian group, consisting of Italian, properly so called, the Rhæto-Romanic, the Ladin, and others. Of these, Italian, the only one that can be called a literary language, belongs naturally more to Italy than to Austria. The total number of real Italians now remaining Austrian subjects is, however, less than one per cent.

Of the Austro-Slavonic languages, the most important is unquestionably the Czech, not only from its being more nearly confined to the Austrian dominions, and thus less susceptible to foreign influence, but on account of the energy and natural capacity of the Czech and kindred races. The ancient literature of Bohemia was so systematically and effectively destroyed by the Jesuits after the Thirty Years' War that it is only recently, and after the most careful researches, that it has become possible to estimate the high position to which it had attained. Until the end of the eighteenth century every Czechish book or manuscript that could be discovered was ruthlessly destroyed, and one Jesuit alone boasted before his death that he had burned in all over sixty thousand volumes. I need not revert again to the bitter conflict now going on between the Czechs and the Germans, but there is little doubt

that if any compromise can be arranged by which the Bohemians and the other Czechish-speaking peoples could obtain a system of self-government equivalent to that of Hungary, the Czechish language would soon recover the literary position it occupied in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Polish literature, as I remarked before, cannot be regarded as belonging exclusively to Austria-Hungary, although Austrian Poland, and especially Cracow, is becoming more and more the centre of Polish national and intellectual life. As a literary language it is more modern than Czech, and only dates from about the sixteenth century, as until then Latin had been the only medium of intellectual intercourse. A hundred years later, however, during the Roman Catholic reaction, the influence of the Jesuits restored Latin once more, and until the eighteenth century but few works of any importance appeared in the national language. The progress that Polish literature has made since that period is the more remarkable as its growth has been most rapid since Poland's loss of national independence, and in spite of the efforts made for the suppression of the language itself by the three powerful states which divided the kingdom between them.

Ruthenian literature is chiefly interesting to students of ancient Slavonic, and is not likely to develop in modern times, while Slovene is only beginning its career as a literary language. Of



A VIEW OF RAGUSA.

the Southern Slavonic dialects, Austro-Servian is necessarily becoming more and more influenced, both from a literary and a national point of view, by the spread of education and culture in the kingdom of Servia. As I showed, when describing the intellectual past of Ragusa, very many of the Servian writers between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, poets, dramatists, and historians, are worthy of holding a high place in the literary world of that period. From then, until recent times, the literary productions of the Serbs have been almost entirely confined to patriotic songs and poems, known as *piesmas*. In these poems the whole romantic history of the Serbs is related, not only with remarkable historic accuracy, but with a graphic force and poetic power of expression, the real merit of which is only beginning to be recognised by students of Southern Slavonic literature. In all the dominant note is intense, undying patriotism, the passion for national freedom and independence, and the swift vengeance that pursues a traitor to his country's liberty. The recent tragedy at Belgrade, and the murder of the King and Queen, would exactly accord with the spirit of the *piesmas* known to Servians of every class, if, as the majority of the nation has been led to believe, the unfortunate King was really about to betray them, and deprive them of the freedom they had won after their centuries of unceasing warfare against the oppression of the Turks.

The newspaper, especially among the non-Germanic races, is the chief medium for literary effort. The Austro-Hungarians are not, as a rule, great readers, and the columns of the daily and weekly Press supply the majority with all the intellectual food they are able to assimilate. Most of the greatest writers are therefore more or less journalists, and in the Press, especially in the Magyar and Slavonic languages, specimens of the best literary work of the foremost writers can be read by all. The political leaders in each nationality regard the newspaper as the most valuable factor in maintaining the racial sentiments of their own people and constantly strive to supply the columns of their own particular organs with the best articles that their writers can produce. The development of periodical literature has consequently been very considerable of late years. In 1901, nearly 5000 periodicals were published in Austria-Hungary. Of these 2060 were in German, 938 in Magyar, and 103 in Magyar together with some other language, while 582 were published in Czech. The remainder represented, in various proportions, all the other languages spoken in the Dual Monarchy. This linguistic division of the Press reminds us once more of the all-important fact that presents itself in every phase of Austro-Hungarian affairs. Nearly every factor in the national life—politics, religion, language, and literature, as well as racial sentiment—represents a distinctly disruptive element, while

almost the only bonds of union are personal loyalty to the present Emperor and fear of absorption by Russia and Germany.

The existence of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy is a matter of such extreme importance to the peace of Europe, that the apparent instability of the foundations upon which it rests is by no means reassuring. For the moment the tact and prudent statesmanship of the Emperor Francis Joseph may be relied upon to maintain a certain degree of unity among the mutually hostile elements that form his Empire, but the very fact that the nature of the Federal Government necessarily throws so vast a responsibility upon the Crown is in itself a reason for regarding the future with uneasiness. It is impossible to hope that all succeeding sovereigns will possess his prudence and statesmanlike qualities, and, above all, his power of resisting the reactionary influences that are still so strong in ecclesiastical and certain political circles. Austria has weathered many a storm in the past, but will she be able to do so when the hand of the Emperor Francis Joseph no longer guides the helm of State? That time alone can show.





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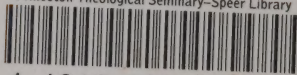
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